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ABSTRACT

This collection of 18 stories of the Scottie Creek People of Alaska is presented in both Upper Tanana, an Athabaskan language, and English in line-by-line translation. The stories, which include personal narratives, cultural explanations, and traditional tales, were recorded in 1988-94. The tales are told by Mary Tyone, a traditional storyteller whose Upper Tanana Athabaskan name is Ts'a Yahnik which means "bringing it (blanket) to someone." An introductory section includes notes about Mary Tyone, information on the Upper Tanana dialects' phonology and writing system, and a brief list of references on Upper Tanana. The legends include: "How I Learned the Language"; "I Tell About My Mother and Father, and When I Was Small"; "How They Observe Puberty Restrictions"; "When Butterfly Went Up to Another World with Two Girls"; "The Story of Bear and Lynx"; "Raven and Muskrat Story"; "When 'Big Sky' Picked Up a Man"; "When Horsefly was Living in a Stump"; "The Mosquito People Story"; "When Tree Squirrel and Ground Squirrel Made a Trade"; "When the Tree Squirrels Cut Fish"; "The Spruce Cone War"; "When 'Wide Step' Packed Back the Hills"; "Goshawk's Story"; "The Thunderbird Nest"; "The Northern Lights"; and "My Old Grandmother: The Little Man Standing in the Moon." (MSE)

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Our Time: Stories of the Scottie Creek People

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Stories told in Upper Tanana Athabaskan by Mary Tyone, Ts'a' Yahnik

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Ttheek'ädn Ut'iin Yaaniidą' Qǫnign'
Old-Time Stories of the Scottie Creek People

Mary Tyone in 1991. Mary's Upper Tanana Athabaskan name is *Ts'ą' Yahnik* 'bringing it (blanket) to someone.' It refers to gift giving during a potlatch and denotes Mary's generosity. Mary, who was born at Scottie Creek village in 1935, was given the name by her mother's uncle, Chief Johnson of Snag, Yukon Territory.

Ttheek'ädn Ut'iin Yaaniidą' Qǫnign'
Old-Time Stories of the Scottie Creek People

Stories Told in Upper Tanana Athabaskan
by Mary Tyone, Ts'ą' Yahnik

Transcribed and Edited
by James Kari

Alaska Native Language Center
1996

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Fairbanks, Alaska

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Foreword

by James Kari

The Upper Tanana River area is a conservative stronghold of Northern Athabaskan intellectual traditions. This book is the first collection of stories ever published in the Upper Tanana language.

It has been a special privilege for me to work with the teller of these stories, Mary Tyone. Mary was born November 15, 1935 to Bell and Laura John in the Upper Tanana village of Scottie Creek on the Chisana River. As the youngest child of elderly parents, Mary had the special training of a *ddhųųgn*, a favorite child. She has a vast story and song repertoire, only a small part of which is presented in the seventeen chapters of this book. Mary is well known in the Athabaskan community for her remarkable linguistic abilities. She knows all of the surrounding languages: Ahtna (her husband Andy's language), Tanacross, and both Southern and Northern Tutchone. She even can understand the very different Gwich'in language when she visits with friends from Venetie and Arctic Village. Mary is also well known for her knowledge of the country and the habits of birds, insects, and animals. See, for example, her precise descriptions of five water plants on page 43.

Mary's patience, insight, and good humor have made the work on this book a most enjoyable experience for me. I want to express my appreciation to Andy Tyone for his kindness and generosity, and to Mary's children Wayne, Jay, Vivian, Velda, Verna, and Vanessa for their encouragement over the years.

Since 1990 I have worked with other expert speakers of the Upper Tanana language, and I would like to thank the following: Charlie David Sr., Titus David, Fred Demit, the late Andy Frank, Bessie John, Calvin John, the late Jack John Justin, Avis Sam, Roy Sam, Oscar Jimmy, and Oscar Albert.

I want to thank the following people who read the manuscript, provided comments, and helped in the production of this book: Tom Alton, Jesse Dementiev, Dave Murray, Doris John, Paul Milanowski, John Ritter, and Jim Ruppert. Jesse has been especially helpful to Mary and me in the logistics and organization of the work.

Mary Tyone: An Appreciation

by James Ruppert

The publication of this book of narratives by Mary Tyone is a momentous event for many reasons. As the first collection of Upper Tanana oral narratives, it begins to reveal to a large audience the abundance of oral wisdom possessed by the Upper Tanana people. Clearly, this book will also contribute in no small way to the documentation and appreciation of the unique qualities of the Upper Tanana language. Furthermore, the volume presents only a small portion of the repertoire of stories Mrs. Tyone knows. Much of her work awaits future translation and publication.

The narratives included here are most unique and impressive, revealing the strength of her craft and the depth of Upper Tanana oral knowledge. Mrs. Tyone heard these stories as a young person who spent much time with family elders and relatives. During her years of working with and for various relations, she was taught to remember and to think strongly about these stories. In the darkness of a winter night, the candles would be lit and someone would begin a story. Though storytelling might continue through much of the night, the listeners were encouraged to stay awake and ask questions.

Mrs. Tyone recalls asking about the nature of those distant time beings who were so human and so animal at the same time, perhaps, because the world of these old-time stories is one much different from today. The sky was not so high then, and the animals and the humans were all part of one another. They spoke the same language and did not have the fixed forms they have today. Part of the wisdom of old time that Mrs. Tyone sees in these stories is their ability to delineate the nature and actions of the animals common in interior Alaska. However, equally important is their ability to illuminate the human condition. The stories imply that humans and animals are not so different, and they offer a path to both areas of wisdom.

During the cold and dark, when the animals migrated, hibernated, or wandered away, one could tell a story without fear of offending them. And the stories reinforced an attitude of respect because

animals were not only the source of food, but also the source of wisdom and knowledge. These stories helped people understand why we should not chase butterflies, why we should not be gullible like Mosquito, and why berries were prohibited during puberty seclusion. But more significantly they helped establish a way of life where listening, thinking, and asking questions were balanced with observation and respect.

Our task as readers is to try to learn some of that wisdom of the old times. Mrs. Tyone thinks it is important that we all try.

The Upper Tanana Dialects and Writing System

Upper Tanana is the Athabaskan language of eastern Alaska on the Tanana River above the town of Tok and in bordering areas of the Yukon Territory on the White River. Robert McKennan documents four divisions of Upper Tanana: Tetlin, Northway, Upper Nabesna-Chisana, and Scottie Creek (McKennan 1981:563). In addition, there is a group at Beaver Creek on the Canadian side. Each of the five has dialectal traits that distinguish it from its neighbors.

The Rev. Paul Milanowski has done important documentary work on the Upper Tanana language since 1962. The 1979 dictionary *Nee'aaneegn', Upper Tanana (Tetlin) Junior Dictionary* by Paul Milanowski and Alfred John is a very useful source but now out of print and hard to find. In fact, there are only a few sources of materials on the Upper Tanana language. A 1994 study by Nobukatsu Minoura on the dialects of Upper Tanana was published in Japan (Minoura 1994), and recently Bessie John and her daughter Doris John have developed some language lessons for the Beaver Creek dialect (John 1994).

This book is the first collection of Upper Tanana stories published in a bilingual format. The sound system has its special complexities and is given a thorough overview by Minoura (1994). The syllable nucleus inventory of the language is very rich. This book incorporates my best understanding of the phonological issues.

Based upon a fuller picture of the Upper Tanana dialects and recently revised writing system for the Tanacross language, we have made the following recommended modifications to the Upper Tanana writing system used in the 1979 dictionary.

Milanowski and John 1979	**1995 system**
Consonants	
<u>dh</u>	ddh
<u>th</u>	tth
<u>th'</u>	tth'

tɬ	tl
tɬ'	tl'
ih	yh

Vowels

u̲	ü
a (schwa in stems)	ä (Northway-Scottie Creek only)

The changes in consonants are the elimination of underlining for the interdental affricates and the addition of the voiceless **y** symbol, **yh**. We have also eliminated the underlined vowels and now use the more attractive double dot, as in **ü** and **ä**.

The vowel **ä** is distinct in Northway-Scottie Creek. In Tetlin it appears to be the same as the vowel **a**. Thus we have these dialectal differences:

	Tetlin	**Northway-Scottie Creek**
spoon	k'ahtsal	k'ahtsäl
meat rack	dahdzaɬ	dahdzäɬ
you$_{plural}$ are walking	ahdaɬ	ahdäɬ

We have not resolved all the writing issues in this Athabaskan language. Tone is an essential part of the sound system, and a fuller understanding of Upper Tanana tone needs to be achieved before it can be shown in the writing system.

The Upper Tanana Sound System and Alphabetical Order

Consonants

	labial	dental	lateral	interdental	apical	palatal	velar	glottal
obstruants								
unaspirated	b	d	dl	ddh	dz	j	g	'
aspirated		t	tl	tth	ts	ch	k	
glottalized		t'	tl'	tth'	ts'	ch'	k'	
voiceless			ł	th	s	sh	x	h
semi-voiced[1]			ł	th	s	shy[1]	x	
voiced			l	dh				

nasals and glides

	m	n				y		
		nh				yh		
(finals only)	{	n'				y'		
		nn'				yy'		

vowels

non-nasal

ii	ee		aa	oo	uu	üü
i	e	ä[2]	a	o	u	ü

nasal

į̨į̨			ą̨ą̨	ǫ̨ǫ̨	ų̨ų̨	ų̈ų̈
į̨		ą̈	ą̨	ǫ̨	ų̨	ų̈

diphthongs

ia	io
į̨ą̨	į̨ǫ̨

Tone: low marked but not written in this book

1. In this series, only **shy** is being written as such at this time. The others are written as **ł**, **th**, **s**, **x**, respectively, not distinguished from the voiceless ones above.

2. The dotted **ä** contrasts only in Scottie Creek and Northway. This is **a** in Tetlin and Upper Nabesna. In these key words **ä** is used in Northway-Scottie Creek.

Vowels in alphabetical order

Rules: non-nasal vowels before nasal, long vowels before short

aa	saa	sun
a, ä	gah	rabbit
	däł	blood
ąą	ąą'	yes
ą, ą̈	łą'	real, true
	wuts'ą̈'	toward him
ee	deeł	crane
e	ts'ehxe	woman
ia	diah	yellowlegs (bird)
ią	xiąh	raft
ii	ts'iit	porcupine
i	chinh	flat, meadow
įį	k'įį'	birch sap
į	ihdį'	I have it, own it
io	yinaahio	he is stretching it
jǫ	giǫ	fireweed
oo	ch'oonayh	medicine
o	choh	big
ǫǫ	nsǫǫ	it is good
ǫ	sǫ'	don't, you should not
uu	tuu	water
u	wuxu'	his tooth
ųų (rare)	eltųų	it (meat) is rare, juicy
ų	shnelts'ų'	s/he kissed me
üü	t'üüh	cottonwood
ü	üh	dipnet
ų̈ų̈ (rare)	dinehtl'ų̈ų̈	the green one
ų̈ (rare)	dinehtl'ų̈h	it is green

Consonants in alphabetical order

Rules: alternating consonants are grouped together, voiceless before voiced, aspirated before glottalized

'	wu'aat	his wife
b,m,mb	ba'	dry fish
	mänh	lake
	mboh, boh	toboggan
ch	chąą	rain
ch'	ch'oh	quill
d	dineh	man, person
ddh	ddhäł	mountain
dl	dlign, dlagn	tree squirrel
dz	dzänh	muskrat
g	gah	rabbit
h	aahaał	s/he is walking
j	neljit	he is afraid
k	keey	village
k'	k'a'	gun
ł/l	łät	smoke
	laatth'ax	ring
n / nh	nän	you
(finals only)	tänh	ice
n' / nn' (finals only)		
	kon'	fire
(finals only)	wukonn'	his fire
s	seeyh	knife
sh	shiin	summer
t	teeł	mat
t'	t'iah	charcoal
th/dh	thüh	belt
	dhihdah	I am staying
tl	wutląą	his/her friend
tl'	tl'uuł	rope
ts	tsa'	beaver
ts'	ts'oo, ts'ogn	spruce

tth	tthee	rock
tth'	tth'aak	plate
w	wutth'aagn'	his plate
x	xał	sled
shy / y / yh	shyah	house
	yaa	sky
(finals only)	aayh	snowshoes
y' / yy' (finals only)		
	k'ay'	willow
(finals only)	wuk'ayy'	his willows

Selected References on Upper Tanana

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Mary and Andy Tyone in 1992. Andy, whose Ahtna name is *Sdeke'*, was born at Crosswind Lake in 1927. He grew up in the Tyone Lake area and first moved to Gulkana in 1948. He is an expert on Ahtna language and culture. Andy and Mary have six children and twenty grandchildren.

"Mary's grandmother and my grandmother both came from the same village, *Taaghael*, below Chitina on the Copper River," Andy says. "I first met Mary in 1956 in Gulkana. We met again in 1957, and we got married in 1958. I worked for the electric company until we moved to Northway the next year. Then I worked for the highway department. That was too much travel so I worked at the Northway school as a janitor until 1973. We moved to Gulkana again and I worked on the pipeline until 1978. That's when we moved to Fairbanks."

CHAPTER
1

Doodagndįį'
How I Learned The Language

Recorded November 8 and December 5, 1994. Tape 4B.

T'ay t'oot'eey neenaattheh xa ch'ah naxognnign.

I am telling the really old-time stories from before our times.

Ay neenaattheh sts'ikeey iin itadulsi' ts'ą' hiixa huushya' xa sts'ikeey iin xa neenaattheh xa naxognnign.

I tell these so that my children will read of the old times and so that my children can then gain the wisdom of the old times.

Shiy shyįį' Ttheek'ädn k'enishthädn eh ts'ikeey iin a kol ts'ą' Bell John iin ishyit hihdaltth'i' dą'.

I was the only one growing up at Scottie Creek village; there were no other children staying there with Bell John's family.

MT: "With my cousin Bessie John, we were growing up together but they moved."

Ne', ne' t'iin tah ts'ąy ts'ą' hihteenaa ts'ą' shiy syhįį' Ttheek'ädn k'enishthädn.

They moved upstream to the Upstream People, and I was the only one growing up at Scottie Creek.

Shta' eh Titus ay iin, sdziit hihǫǫheeyh, neenaattheh dą' įį'eh sheh nahiholnik.

My Dad and Titus's [Uncle Titus John's] people would talk into my ears [giving me advice], and would tell me about the ancient times.

Stsǫǫ Maggie (John) mǫǫsi' chih ay chih.
My grandma — her name was Maggie (John) — she too [would tell me stories].
Tsät dziin tah tsät huuxa ihttheeł, na'ihxagn eh shich'iheh'iił tl'aan neenaattheh xa sheh nahiholnik.
During the day I would cut wood for them, and when it got dark, they would feed me, and then they would tell me about the ancient times.
Ayts'änh än ch'ah neenaattheh ts'ą' qǫnign' i'ishnay.
From then on, I knew the old-time stories.

Swimming at *K'ehtthüign*, the old village at Fishcamp Creek near Northway in about 1956. Mary is standing on the bank at the right, Maggie John is swimming in midstream, and Laura and Bell John are at the far left side.

Ihtsuul dą' ts'änh shtaay iin stsǫǫ Maggie iin eh hii'eh sdziit hǫǫheeyh ts'ą' all łahtthign' ts'ą' neenaattheh ǫǫnign' i'ishnayh.

From when I was small, my uncles and Maggie and them they spoke into my ears, and I know all of the old-time stories.

Aych'a k'aadu' sts'ikeey iin yita'udulsi' xa k'aadu' mbeh nahognnign shaaneegn' didahdiłeey ay tl'aan dinahtl'aa hii'eh naatl'ät ts'ą'.

So now they are recording me telling these in my language so that my children can read them once they are written in this book.

Dinahtl'aa mbeh łootaadüh.

A book of them will come out.

Ayxa ch'a jah shaaneegn' eh nahognign.

That is why I am telling these in my language.

Ayshyjį'.

That's all.

Mary's father and mother, Bell and Laura John, in Northway, 1968. Bell John (*Nakusts'althät* 'someone recognizes me') is of the *Naltsiin* Crow Clan. He was born in 1884 in the Northway area and died November 19, 1974. Laura John *(Dzinihaa)* was born in 1887 at Chisana and is of the *Dik'aagi* Clan. She died July 10, 1981. Laura and Bell were married in 1908 and had nine children, of whom only Mary is still living.

CHAPTER
2

Shnąą Shta' eh Xa Nahognnign Ihtsuul Dą'
I Tell about Mother and Father and When I was Small

Recorded April 31, 1991. Tape2A:1.

Shta' shta' du' Northway Sheh Nia k'it mihǫǫłiin nt'eh, my Dad.

My father [Bell John] was born at Northway at *Sheh Nia* [ridge near Northway Junction on the Alaska Highway].

My mom, nign' Naat'aayät, Naat'aayät Tth'aal' shyit ch'ah shnaa ihǫǫłiin.

My mom [Laura John] was born upland there at *'Naat'aayät's* cradle' [Mt. Natazhat on the upper White River].

Naat'aayät wu'änh nänh t'aagn du' Naat'aayät Tth'aagn'.

Up behind *Naat'aayät* is *'Naat'aayät's* plate' [Mt. Riggs].

Naat'aayät Tth'aal' shyit shnaa ihłįį.

My mother was born there at *'Naat'aayät's* cradle.'

Chidahłeeh Maagn ch'ale' shnaa wutsay ettsay.

My mother's grandfather is buried right there at the shore of 'fish channeled into weir lake' [Tchawsahmon Lake, on the Canadian side, west of White River, sometimes also called Tazamona Lake and Euger Lake].

Stsay Niltlit mǫǫsi'.

My grandfather's name was *Niltlit*.

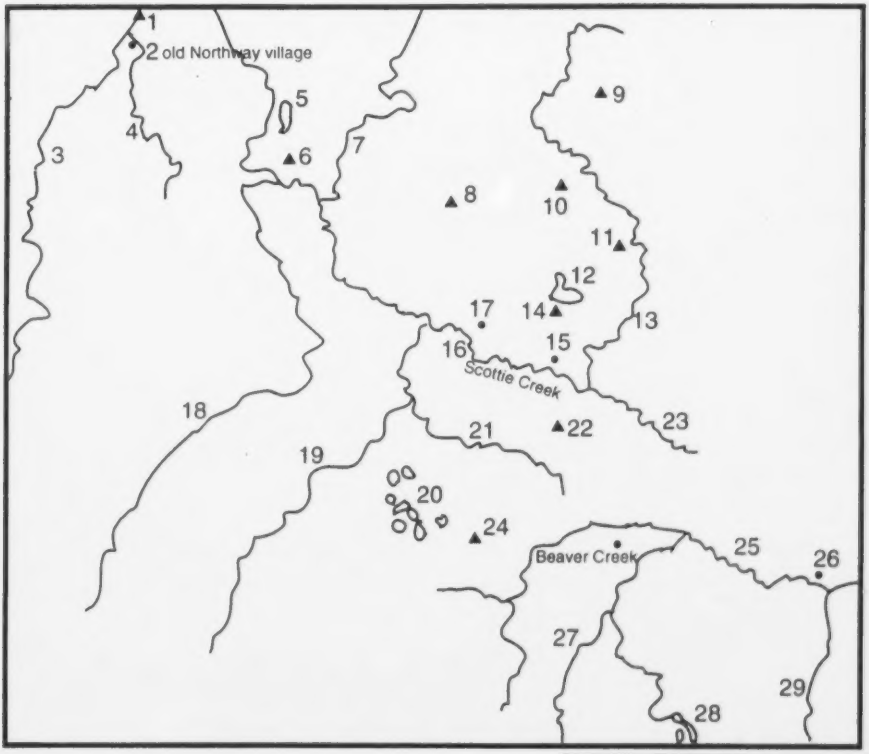
Shtaay "Tuhch'eek", nondlee k'i Big Jack, mǫǫsi' chi'i shyit ettsah.

My father's brother, whose name was *Tuhch'eek* and in English was Big Jack, is also buried there.

Shnąą wunąą stsǫǫ Jessie Joe chi'i shyit ettsah.

My mother's mother, my grandmother, Jessie Joe, is also buried there.

Place Names of the Upper Tanana



1. **Sheh Nia** '? long' (translation uncertain)
   ridge at Northway Junction *(p. 5)*
2. **K'ehtthiign** 'lake outlet'
   old Northway village *(pp. 2, 9; photo p. 2)*
3. **Naambia Niign** 'stone river'
   Nabesna River
4. **Dzįįłąy Niign** 'water divides'
   Moose Creek
5. **Łeet'ot Keey** 'mud village'
   Tenmile Lake village *(p. 15)*
6. **Łeet'ot Ddhäl'** 'mud mountain'
   northern point of Tenmile Hill
7. **Cheejil Niign** 'grayling creek'
   Gardiner Creek *(photo p. 10; pp. 11, 15)*
8. **Tthiidluut Ddhäl** 'sharp head mountain'
   Paradise Hill

9. **Niiduuy Ts'inehdaayh** 'we shoot lynx with arrow'
   Wienerwurst Mountain
10. **Titsjjkjjy** 'that which is sunk'
    mountain "Scottie"
11. **Tthee Tsaak'eet** 'rock cache'
    mountain "Starvation"
12. **Ch'atxąą' Männ'** 'moldy lake'
    Island Lake *(cover photo)*
13. **Ts'oo Got Choh** 'big spruce knee'
    Big Scottie Creek (upper)
14. **Tayh Tsäł** 'little hill'
    High Cache hill *(photo p. 84)*
15. **Tayh Tsäł T'aat** 'beneath little hill'
    High Cache village site *(photo p. 58)*
16. **Ttheek'ädn Niign** 'rock fishing place'
    Lower Scottie Creek *(pp. 1, 11, 12)*
17. **Ttheek'ädn Keey** 'rock weir place'
    Scottie Creek village *(pp. 1, 9, 11; photo p. 14)*
18. **Taatthee Niign** 'rock water stream'
    Stuver Creek
19. **Ttheetsąą' Niig** 'copper river'
    Chisana River, above Nabesna River *(p. 12; photo p. 12)*
20. **Tehshyüü Männ'** 'broad whitefish lake'
    Wellesley Lakes *(p. 12)*
21. **Ch'ign Niign** 'cutbank creek'
    Mirror Creek
22. **Tthee Shyok** 'hollow rock'
    mountain west of Airs Hill *(photo p. 40)*
23. **Tsüüh Hǫǫjj Niig** 'Indian potatoes exist'
    South Fork of Scottie Creek
24. **Tehshyüü Ddhäl'** 'humpback whitefish mountain'
    Wellesley Mountain *(p. 75)*
25. **Haltäl Niign** 'burst out, flowing out creek'
    lower Snag Creek *(p. 9)*
26. **Haltäl Cheegn** 'burst out, flowing out mouth'
    Snag Village
27. **Taatthee Niign** 'rock water stream'
    Beaver Creek
28. **Chidahłeeh Männ'** 'fish chaneled into weir lake'
    Euger Lake *(pp. 5, 8)*
29. **Naadzǫh Niig** 'murky river'
    White River *(p. 71)*

Chidahłeeh Männ' wushyiit mbeet jį'eh ts'aan jį'eh ch'uljüüd jį'eh cheejil jį'eh wushyiit hǫǫlįįn.
In 'fish channeled into weir lake' are lake trout, lingcod, pike and grayling.
Ch'ah Chidahłeeh Männ' hiyehnay.
And thus they call it 'fish channeled into weir lake.'
Wuts'änh teełąyh ihidoodehtsiik
They used to block off the stream where it flows out from it [the lake]
łuugn hiishyii ha'ełeeh xa.
so that they could take out fish.

§

Recorded November 8, 1994. Tape 4B.
Shnąą du' niłk'eenaan' wuxol' tsintdęęt'eh ts'ą'
My mother was crippled in both legs, and
no good, k'aa good ts'ą' natidaagn.
she could not walk around very well.
Łehnaan' tät eh natätjettiin.
She would go around by using canes on both sides.
Shnąą diit'eh k'aa mbaa dihtay, k'aa mbaa hihuutsüü, hǫǫ' eltsįį t'ǫǫt'eey.
Nothing was too hard or too difficult for my mother, even though she was like that.
Gah jį'eh itdlįǫ.
She would snare rabbits.
Gah jį'eh neexa na'elshyeek.
And she brought back rabbits for us.
Tthil jį'eh tah ka dach'eetl'įǫ ts'ą', tthil jį'eh.
She also set snares for ground squirrels.
Daanii nign' Chidahłeeh hinay dänh ch'a shnąą k'i'inthädn.
My mother grew up way upriver at the place they call *Chidahłeeh* 'fish channeled into weir lake.'

Ishyitts'änh wunąą ehtiin eh Snag tthän' ts'eeneełhịhdeeł Haltäl Cheegn hinay dänh ishyit hukeey hǫǫłį'.

From there, after her mother died, they moved in a group down below to Snag [in about 1901], and their village was where they call *Haltäl Cheegn* [the mouth of Snag Creek].

Ishyitts'änh nǫǫ' Nį̨į'į̨' xogn į̨į'eh tah naaneełhihteldik ts'ą'.

From there they moved again in a group over to 'Lookout' [also called Sourdough].

Ts'oo Got Gaay hinih dänh hihdeltth'iiy eh

They then lived at 'little spruce knee' [Little Scottie Creek], and

naanohts'ąy hihdeltth'iiy eh tl'uuł huts'eedaał niihio ts'ą' tthän' Haltäl Cheegn ts'ą' k'aa nahtitdäl.

they were living across there [across the border on the Alaska side] when they made the boundary [in about 1910], and they did not return again to the mouth of Snag Creek.

Ts'ą' Ttheek'ädn hinih dänh keey hihultsį̨ ts'ą'.

And then they lived in the village called 'rock weir' [the mouth of Big Scottie Creek near the Tanana River. Mary was born at Scottie Creek in 1935].

Ishyit Ttheek'ädn hinih dänh ch'a k'inishthädn

I grew up at the place they call 'rock weir.'

§

Shnąą k'aa wuk'it ch'ihol'ay, uxol' kat hooł̨į t'ǫǫt'eey.

No one could out-do my mother even though her legs were crippled.

Diniign kah į̨į'eh tah Taałia Tthign' dänh daach'eetl'ịǫ ts'ą'.

She set snares for moose out at 'fine sand moose fence.'

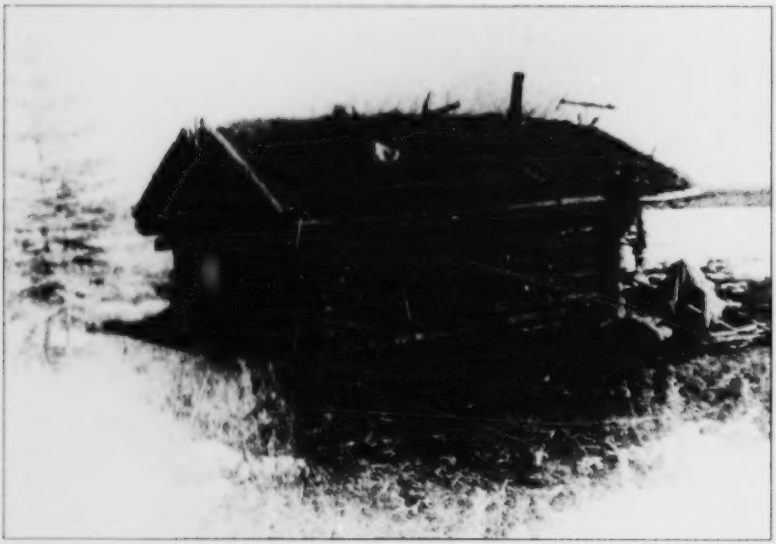
Diniign neexa itdl̨ǫ ts'ą' ay k̨į̨iy' xay nats'etdik.

We would spend the winter living on the moose she would snare for us.

Ay tl'aan shnąą iin t'axo 18 years old ihłiin eh K'ehtthign dänh huunihdlah tl'aan shyit keey ts'ihultsį̨

Then when I was eighteen years old I brought them [by sled] to 'outlet' [Northway Fishcamp village] and we made a home there.

Ishyittah dzaltth'i' ts'ą' ishyit shch'a' huu'ihǫǫkol.
We were living there when they went away from me [they passed away].
Ay'eh shta' ǫǫkol eh dą' C'ulc'ena' hinay dänh ts'iniideeł tl'aan ishyittah neeshyah ts'ihuhtsįį.
Then when my father passed away we moved to Gulkana where they call 'tearing river' and there we made our home.
Ishyit dzeltth'ii ts'änh tthǫǫ Delta hinay dänh ts'iłoo xay dzaltth'i' tl'aan
Then we spent one winter down there where they call Delta, and after one year
ishyitts'änh Fairbanks ts'ą' neeshyah ts'ihuhtsįį ts'ą' ishyit Fairbanks tah dzeltth'ih k'aadu'.
then we made our home in Fairbanks, and we stay in Fairbanks at this time.



Mary's trapline cabin at *Cheejil Niign* (Gardiner Creek). Bell John built the cabin in 1921.

First Memories of the Scottie Creek Area

Recorded February 18, 1988. Tape 1A1. This is the first story that we recorded. Mary was three years old in 1938.

Ihtsuul dą' hi'agnnayh.
I remember when I was small.
Shta' dinänn' k'enihxoł eeł tah,
My father broke his back while trapping;
naateedlii eh, shnąą k'ahmänn' yitehkaan eh yuukah ɬįį eh xał teetąą.
he was starting to freeze, and the next morning my mother went out for him at dawn driving a sled with dogs.
Eh wutąy ts'uudih'ąą.
And we found his trail.
Ihtsuul dą' saan tah hi'agndnayh.
I was small and I can barely remember this.
Ishyits'änh neeshyax naats'iltįį tl'aan,
And then after we brought him back to our house,
ishyit łaakay shyüh deetaan k'üt'eey ihshyidn Cheejil Niign dzaltth'i'.
we were staying there at 'grayling creek' [Gardiner Creek] for two snows [two years].
Ihshyits'änh t'axo shta' tthii'iiduugn eh, Ttheek'ädn shnąą naaneeniidlah.
Then when my father finally began to hobble out again, my mother brought us back to 'rock weir place' [Scottie Creek village].
Ishyit shtaay iin hihdeltth'iih.
There my uncle's people [White River Johnny's family] lived.
Ay nee'ich'eh'aal kįįy' shyit k'inishthät, Ttheek'ädn dänh.
There, by his [White River Johnny's] feeding us, I grew up there at 'rock fishing place' [Scottie Creek].
Shta' nii'etshyay eh, shta' eh nign' Taałia Tthing' hiiniih niign ning' chiit nän' tah natsetneek.
My father got well again, and we moved around the country with my father upland at where they call 'fine sand moose fence,' upriver and upland.

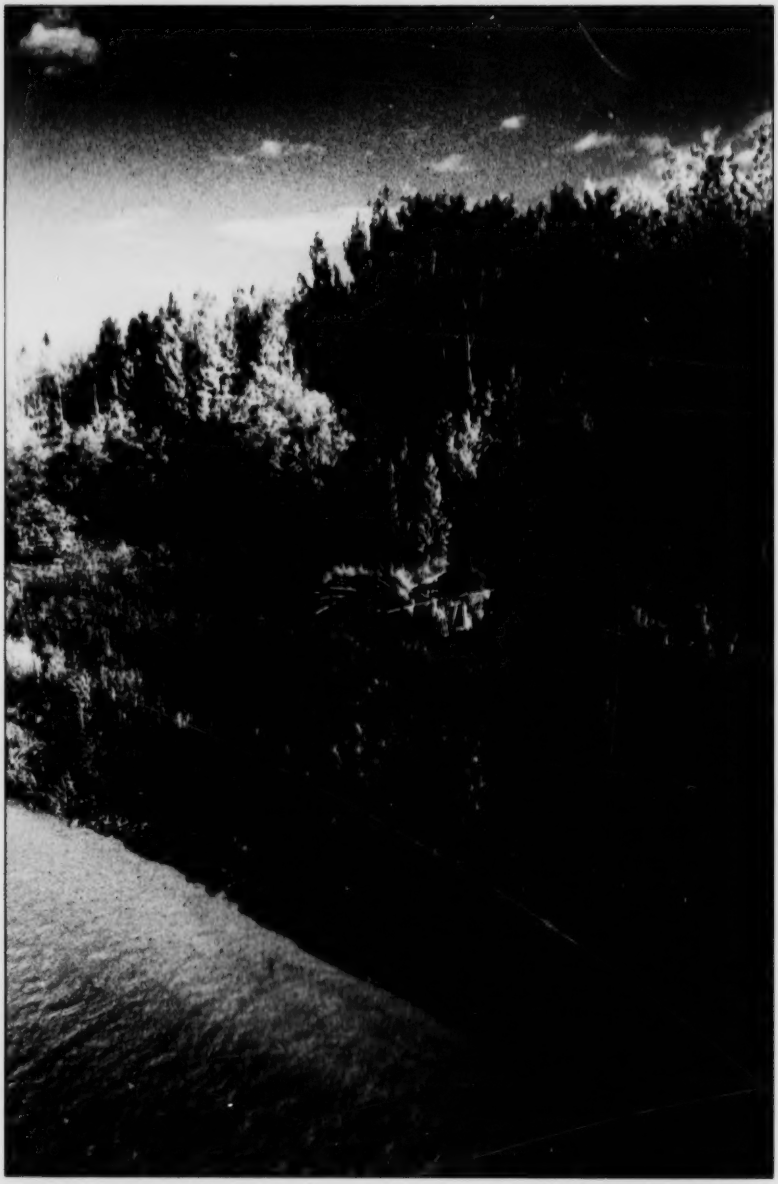
Diniign ts'ixąą xa shyi' ts'ehgąyh jį'ęh.
We would kill moose and then dry the meat.
Ishyitts'änh naann' Tehshyüü ts'ą' skets'idik.
From there we went across to 'broad whitefish' [Wellesley Lake].
Ishyit Tehshyüü xa nign' eeł eh dzeltth'iik.
There upland of 'broad whitefish' we stayed trapping.
Tl'aan xuhnoo Tth'iitu' xa nats'etdik ts'ą' Ttheetsaann' Niign nats'etdik.
After that we went up the 'main river' [Tanana River], and we went to 'copper river' [Chisana River].
Hohtthän' Ttheek'ädn nats'etdik.
Or we went back down to 'rock fishing place' [Scottie Creek].

The Chisana River makes a sharp bend to the west at the mouth of Scottie Creek, *Ttheek'ädn Cheeg* 'rock weir mouth,' just below Scottie Creek village site. Photo by Wayne Towriss courtesy of Yukon Native Language Centre.

Fishing Season

Recorded November 1, 1991. Tape 2A5.

End of August k'ädn nats'ihohtsiik.
At the end of August we would build a weir.
Ay tl'aan Ch'it'aan' Tsiik Saa łuugn ts'ehk'aay ts'ehgąyh
Afterward, in 'the month leaves turn yellow' [early September], we would dry split whitefish.
Niichǫǫ Saa ii'aagn eh łuugn tänh tänh k'it łuugn ts'ehtän.
When it turned to 'bull moose month' [late September], we would freeze the whitefish on the ice.
Mba' ts'ehk'aay wuka'itgąy eh ts'ehtänh tl'aan
We would dry the surface of the split fish for half-dry fish and freeze it, and then
xay kah nits'iłeek.
we would store it for winter.
Tl'aan dzännax chih ts'ehtsiik.
Next we also would make fermented fish.
Łuugn sometimes dän deetaan dzännax hehtsiik.
Sometimes they would make forty fish into fermented fish.
Xay uudih wukjjy' dzeltth'iik.
We would live all winter on that.



The site of *Ttheek'ädn Keey,* Scottie Creek village. This cabin was built by Bell John, who last used it in 1961. Photo by Wayne Towriss courtesy of Yukon Native Language Centre.

Traveling in the Scottie Creek Area

Ttheek'ädn ts'änh Cheejil Niign ts'ą' neetąy hittheh Ttheechjį' ts'iniihook.

On our trail from 'rock fishing place' to 'grayling creek' [Gardiner Creek], first we would camp at 'rock point.'

Ishyitts'änh Taatsänh Männ' ts'iniihook.

From there we would camp at 'brown water lake.'

Ishyitts'änh Mänh Ts'eegn, Mänh Ts'eegn ts'änh Dzänh Naats'injittheeł (Männ').

From there [we went] to 'narrow lake,' and from 'narrow lake' to 'we chop across the muskrats (lake).'

Ishyitts'änh Ch'uljüüd Mänh Gaay, Cheejil Niign ts'idik.

From there to 'small pike lake,' then we would come to 'grayling creek' [Gardiner Creek].

Ishyidn eeł eh dzeltth'ih.

There we stayed trapping.

Dzänh xa eeł ts'idlaak.

We set traps for muskrats.

Ishyitts'änh store ts'ą' ts'idik tah.

From there at times we would go to the store.

Ch'uljüüd Mänh Choh tl'aann Łeet'ot Keey, ishyitts'änh K'ehtthiign ts'idik.

After 'big pike lake' we would go to 'mud village' [Tenmile village], then we came to 'lake outlet' [old Northway site].

Ishyitts'änh nts'uukeet tl'aan ne' naatsetdik.

After we shopped, we would go from there back upriver.

Tenmile, Łeet'ot Keey, naats'iniidook.

At 'mud village' [Tenmile], we would camp again.

Ishyitts'änh Cheejil Niign ts'iniihook.

From there we would camp at 'grayling creek' [Gardiner Creek].

Ishyidn eeł eh dzeltth'iik dzänh tah.

There we would stay trapping among the muskrats.

Dzänh kah eeł ts'idlaak.

We would set traps for muskrats.

Lilly and Walter Northway with Mary at a potlatch in Tanacross in the early 1960s. Photo by Andy Tyone.

CHAPTER
3

Hihǫhtthǰ Ts'ą'
How They Observe Puberty Restrictions

This is an informative and detailed discussion of the important puberty rituals that Mary participated in.

Recorded May 24, 1995. Tape 4A.

Ts'onhtthehdą' dineey iin ts'ehxe iin eh hihǫhtthe'.

Long ago both the men and the women observed restrictions.

Dineh chih tthihihaak.

The men also used to go out [to be sequestered].

Dineh iin tthihihaak tah huu'eh shyah gaay yaa'oogn ohts'ąy keey ohts'ąy huu'eh hiihohtsiik ts'ą'

When the men [or women] went out to be sequestered, they used to build for them a little house way out there, far outside the village.

MT: "They put you where you can't hear people talking."

Huutthiikal' huułeek.

They would wear puberty hoods.

Taatsaann' chuy' eh huutthiishyoo' hehtsiik.

They put raven feathers on their hoods.

Ay'eh ch'ah old people iin huutthi' k'aa ditgaay right away.

That's how the old people did not get gray hair right away.

MT: "You can't even drink cold water with your mouth when you become woman or man; you can't even stretch your leg, your leg gotta be under your feet."

Dineh k'i hunihheey hidhagnnüh already.

I already forgot to speak in Native {laughs}.

Ts'ehxe iin tthihihaak tah huutthiishyoo' ts'ät xa huutthiishyoo' hehtsiik.
When the women go out they make their hoods out of a blanket [to protect their eyes and hair].[1]
Yaa t'eey k'aa hihneh'ǫy ts'ą'
They can't look right at the sky and
naach'ihnikąą' dixol' t'aat hihdlaak.
when they sew, they tuck their legs beneath them.
K'aa tth'ihdel'įįy dixol' huuxol' nixeełdelthąy xa.
If they don't tuck their legs, they would tend to get leg cramps.
Ay tthihnatgagn ch'a' taatsaan' chuy' eh huutthiishyoo' hehtsiik.
And to prevent getting gray hair they put raven feathers on their hoods.

Naach'ihnuukąą' xa ch'ittheh hiiyeh tth'eeh hihnidädn ay kon' tah hohdląą' ts'ą'
For them to be able to sew, first the people from each house would twist sinew thread for them.
Tth'ehteeł ts'ełign łiin huutah ditah huuxa łiihuhnit'ak ts'ą'.
One at a time they all bring some moose back sinew to them.
Ts'ehxe iin tth'ehteeł ts'axt'iin nłiin hadaahiłeek ts'ą'.
The women would take the sinew to the girl.
Tth'eeh all łahtthign' tth'eeh hihnidädn ts'ą' huutl'aahiiyiłeek tl'aan
They twist up all that sinew and give it to them, and then
chih kee heht'üüt jiyh įį'eh łįįxeel' įį'eh xeeł įį'eh tthi'tl'uuł įį'eh huuxa heht'üüt ts'ą' huuxa heht'üüt ts'ą'.
they cut out patterns for them for footwear or mittens or dog packs or packs or hair tassels.
Naach'ihnikąą'.
And they would sew.

1. The word for 'girl in puberty' is *ts'axt'iin* 'the one with a hat or hood.'

Naach'ihnikąą' tah k'ät'eey naach'ihnigǖǖh, naach'ihnits'ǫǫt.
When they would do the sewing, they would sew either with large stitches, or they would sew with tiny stitches.
Sewing machine naach'inettl'įǫ k'ät'eey naach'ihnikąą'.
They would sew like the way a sewing machine sews.
MT: "Them days if you got large stitch, the men don't marry you."

Aagn naach'inigǖǖ iin gah ts'ehxeh huuhinih tl'aan naach'inits'ǫǫdn iin du' tsahtsät ts'ehxeh huuhinih.
The ones that sew with large stitches, they call them 'rabbit woman'; and the ones that sew with tiny stitches, they call 'mouse woman.'
Łaakay niign naach'inikąą' iin hǫǫłįį.
These are the two ways that women can sew.
Naach'ihnits'ǫǫdn ch'ah good ts'ehxeh, lisüü tahtsay iin ch'ah naach'ihnits'ǫǫdn.
The one that is a fine stitcher is a good woman; she will make money because she sews with fine stitches.

Huuła' tah chih tl'uuł netchüh huułaagüü taałeel ch'a' tl'aan
Their hands were tied [between the fingers] to prevent having spaces between the fingers, and
ch'iithuul' huuthiin danattl'iun.
a swan bone straw was tied around their necks.
Ay'eh ch'iithuul' eh tuu k'ädn nidi:gn ditheegn' di:gn łahihtee'ah ts'ą'
And they would stick the straw way back in their throats when they drank cold water, and
tuu hii'eh etnaa huuxu' taatuu'itl'ik de' huuxu' daltäl ch'a'.
they drink water with it [the straw] to prevent water from touching their teeth and to prevent the teeth from chipping.
MT: "Also due to this you aren't supposed to see a woman's teeth when she talks."
Ay tl'aan dzeeh chih k'aa hi'aal.
And also they don't chew any [spruce] gum.

Łaakay shyüh huu'eh huułiign eh tah dzeeh hi'aał.
They don't chew gum for two snows [years].
MT: "I become woman in July and never come home until December."

Ts'ehłign shyüh xąą' k'eht'eey yaa'ogn ts'äł shyii hidaak tl'aan tah
They would stay way out in the bushes for half of one year and then
t'axo daahihtidaagn eh k'ahmän' yihkaak k'ich'įįshyah dąą' tah tsät hittheeł dąą'.
when they come back in [to the village] they would cut wood early in the morning according to the Big Dipper [constellation] clock.
Kon' tah łahtthing' tsät łihniitthik.
They cut wood for every house.
Łahtthing' tsät łihniitthik tl'aan t'axo ha'ihkaagn eh daahidaak.
They cut all the wood and when it was full daylight they would come back in.

Ayts'änh noo' łuugn elt'al chih k'aa hihtaa'aal k'aadu' łuugn hahihtiign.
And then they would not eat fresh fish, just when they catch it.
Łaakay nihiinihok tl'aan tah łuugn hi'aał.
They would wait two days and then eat the fish.
Tsüüh chih k'aa hiiyildeel huuxu' huts'änh įįhuk'eltsiin nahshyeeh xa.
And they did not eat the Indian potatoes *[hydesarum]* either because their teeth would grow inward from them.
Hihdįįtsįį tah tsüüh wutl'ahchįį' ts'änh ne'isdziihiidehch'il.
When they were hungry, they would split the potatoes from the bottom tip.
Hiitl'ahchįį' ts'änh dign hiyildeeł hihdįįtsįį tah.
And they would eat them upward from the bottom tip when they were hungry.

K'aa tsüüh hi'aal dogn t'eey łaakay shyüh huułeek.
They would not eat the potatoes at all for two years.
Ntl'ät jign jį'eh dįjt'eey k'aa hi'iil dogn łaakay shyüh t'eey huułeek tl'aan.
They did not eat lowbush cranberries and blueberries either until two years had gone by.
Taat'axo jign jį'eh nihtl'ät jį'eh hihnildiił.
Then finally they would eat blueberries or lowbush cranberries.
Ay jign, ntl'ät eh k'aa hihnildeel tsaan'ttheel in, danihnuuy in tah.
They would not eat the blueberries or the lowbush cranberries or the highbush cranberries or the red currants.
Hiits'änh ishyidn nahetdaak tah too much däł huu'ah' än el'ąy ch'a' jign elt'äl k'aa hildeel tl'aan.
Because when they had their period, to prevent excessive bleeding they would not eat the red juicy berries.
K'ąy' tthaay hiyehnay ay huut'aat hihdidlaak.
They would keep what they call the tundra rose beneath them.
Tthiihihaak ts'axt'iin hiłeek tah ay k'ąy' tthaay ts'änh k'aa too much ch'iitay ts'ä' däł wu'ah'än diin.
When they went out at puberty they would not bleed too much due to this tundra rose.
Ay ch'a' k'ąy' tthaay huut'aat hihdidlą̨ą̨ ts'ą̈' k'aa hǫǫ' hidiin
To prevent this, they kept that tundra rose underneath them and that would not happen.

§

Chiił keey iin tthiihihaak tah huutheegn' k'idoodelthayh tah.
The boys would go out [to be sequestered] when their voices changed.
Yaa'aa do:gn huushyah hihohtsiign dänh huuhehdaak tl'aan
They would build their house way out there and they would leave them there,
taatsaan' chuy' eh huutthiishyoo' hehtsį̨ą̨.
and they would put raven feathers on their hoods.

Tuutǫǫł elgay eh chih dinǫǫ' hihk'ǫą́h.
They would press a white cup against their faces.
Nǫǫ' k'it ch'iheltsäł taadign' ts'ą́' dinii' hahihtehnayh huunǫǫ' natnaatloo' ch'a'.
As they washed their faces, they would move the hands upward to prevent their faces from getting flabby.
Ts'ehxe iin chih hǫǫ' t'eey.
The women also would do this.
Dign' dinii' hahihtehnayh nǫǫ' ch'ihildeeh tah.
They would move the hands upward when they washed their faces.
Shdaashyign ts'ą́' dinǫi hahihtehnayh tah huunǫǫ naatlühnelthayh.
If they move the hands downward on the face, their faces would tend to sag down.
Ayxa k'aa hǫǫ' nǫǫ' ch'ihildeeh tah daadign ts'ą́' shyǫǫ' dinǫǫ' hahihtehnayh.
So they would not wash the face like this, they would only move the hands upward on the face.
Ch'ithuuchinn' tsät thuuchinn' dithaat hiidi'aał dziin uudih hiidi'aał ts'ą́'
They would chew on a branch in their mouths, a spuce limb, all day long they would chew that and
huuxu' k'aa łatnitloo huuxu' hetshyaan eh tah huuxu' huuthaa ha'itdeeh.
their teeth would not rot, and when they get old, their teeth would not fall out of their mouths.
Hǫǫ' eltsiin eh shxu' ihk'ǫą nch'a shiy hǫǫ' t'eey shxu' hǫǫǫǫ.
That's the way that I trained my teeth, and I still have my teeth.

Ayshyǫǫ'.
That's all.

CHAPTER
4

Laalil Keenän'ii'ąą Ts'ehxe Łaakay iin eh
When Butterfly Went up to Another World with Two Girls

This story is widely known throughout Northern Athabaskan. It can be regarded as a cautionary tale for young girls.

Recorded November 2, 1992; corrected Fall 1994. Tape 1B(3)

Laalil xa nootidhagnnik.
I will tell about Butterfly.
Ts'ehxe łaakay iin Laalil eh hihdelxoh.
Two women were playing with butterflies.
Dziin uudih Laalil nahnetdik.
All day long they were following butterflies around.
Dziin uudih Laalil nahnetdik.
All day long they followed butterflies.
Ishyiyit t'eey t'axo Laalil huu'eh keenän'ii'ąą.
And then, all of a sudden, Butterfly took them up to another world.
Yaat'aagn tah huu'eh nän' ninii'ąą.
It took them through the sky into another world.

§

Ishyit tąy haadäl eh huu' nduu huu'eh huushyaak ts'ą'.
They were going on the trail there, and they got lost somewhere.
Nduu haadäł ts'ą' hiits'ihetniik.
They did not know where they were going.
Di:gn' tąy haadäl eh daashyit Ts'igąąk ts'ist'e' gaay chanettįį.
They were going along the trail; down below, the little old lady Chickadee was lying there.

43

"Tąy hǫǫts'eek nign' ch'ah hǫǫsoon, tąy hǫǫteeł nign' sǫ' k'i'ahdeel.
"The narrow trail is good, but don't go on the wide trail up there.
Tąy hǫǫts'eegn nign' ahdäł de'," huu'ehnih.
You should go up on the narrow trail," she told them.
Ay ts'ehxe iin noo' haadäl eh tąy sdzihǫǫ'ah.
Those women went far away and then the trail forked.
"Stsǫǫ jin niign ahdäł de' nee'ehnih xa," ch'idia' nih.
"My grandmother told us to go this way," the younger sister said.
Ch'aadeh du', "Jin niign xaxu ahdäł de' stsǫǫ nih."
But the older sister said, "My grandmother said to go over this way."
Ishyit t'eey didia' yiteemaak ǯtsǯ däł nihgot.
Then she really fought her younger sister; she punched her nose bloody.
Ay'eh daadeh eh tąy hǫǫteel nign' teeshyah.
And then the older sister started up the wide trail.
Noo' haadäl eh dahdzäł da'ee'ąą.
They were going along out there, and there was a rack sticking up.
T'aat Ts'änt'ay wuts'enay eedah.
The one we call Devil [an evil man] was staying beneath there.
Ts'eenät yich'ǯä hut'ǯ.
An old lady was living opposite him.
Xahdogn' dahdzäł k'it ɮǯ elk'aagn naat da'eedlay.
Up above on the rack were split dog carcasses.
Ay ɮǯ elk'aagn gąy int'eey ttheehihdelxoh ay'eh ishyit.
And those split dry dog carcasses were barking right there.

Ts'ehxe didia' eh nihniideeł.
The woman and her younger sister stopped.
"Shiy stsay eh tihteeł" ch'aadeh nih.
"I will lie with my grandfather," the older sister says.
Ch'idia' du', "Shiy stsǫǫ eh tihteeł."
The younger sister said, "I will lie down with my grandmother."
Tädn hihnehtiat.
At night they went to bed.

Ts'eenät yits'ą' deldzi̱i̱t.
The old lady whispered to her.
"Naadeh tidhahxi̱i̱ nt'eh. Mbaah hach'uudi̱l'i̱i̱'.
"He will kill your older sister. Watch out for her.
Jah gah ts'ädn nu' wuk'ani̱htah," wutsǫǫ yehnih.
Look for her here through this hole in the rabbit skin blanket," her grandmother told her.
Ay'eh tädn eh ch'iitsay (ch'itsogn) noo' tthiah k'it kon' nia' ch'iitsay (ch'itsok) tthidehtą̨ą̨ xa
That night an iron (shaped like a penis) was lying in the middle of the fire embers.
Ts'änt'ay ch'iitsay neltthia eh yijoo' ishyit ɬateeshyiɬ ts'ą' yidhehxi̱i̱.
The Devil put the red-hot iron through her [vagina] and he killed her.
Daadeh neh'i̱h nooh ts'änh gah ts'ädn nu' ts'änh.
Then from in the back she saw her older sister through the hole in the rabbit blanket.
Ay tl'aan ne' yik'it jehniik.
Then he [Devil] had her covered back up [the dead older sister with a blanket].

K'ahmän' yi'i̱hkaan eh ts'ihniideek.
In the morning at dawn they woke up.
Ahnaat du' "Ts'ii'ǫǫthiit ch'ah di̱i̱t'ay," daadeh ehnih.
From across there, "You should wake up," she said to her older sister.
Ay Ttheedzaan wuts'enay du' "Ti'atnagn, eetiin nt'eh dadhi̱h'ay," yehnih.
The one we call Devil said to her, "She is tired, let her lie there."[1]
Shyak kat ch'atnay yidhehxiin.
He was telling a lie; he had killed her.
Ay tl'aan dat ch'idia' "Än nii'uhhaa'," nih.
Then that younger sister said, "Let me go out to the toilet."
Ay'eh dat ts'änt'ay, "Jah shi̱i̱tl'aat," yehnih.
Then that Devil said to her, "Go here in my palm."

1. Mary uses the alternate name *Ttheedzaan* for the Devil.

"Ena' ayaa stsay!"
"No, that's dirty my grandfather!"
"Jah shtthiit'aagn."
"Here on my head."
"Stsay ena' ayaa!" yehnih.
"No, that's dirty my grandfather!" she told him.
"Ay'eh tl'uuł shtl'anjįłeeh.
"Give me that rope.
A' tthän' ni'uhha'," yehnih.
I'm going down there [to the toilet]," she told him.
"Shtaay, tl'uuł shtl'ädn hi'jhshüh, statihhaał ch'a'," yehnih.
She told him, "Uncle, tie a rope around my waist to keep me from running away."
Ay'eh wutsǫǫ ch'igot k'ah eh ch'iithoo eh yaa niinii'ąą.
Then her grandmother put by her some [moose] knee fat and a stone scraper.
A' tthän' niteeha', ch'aachin' xa tl'uuł natnįhdeeł.
As she started down to the toilet, she put a rope over a stump.
"Nday nehnih de' "nidhisdįǫt" dǫǫni' de'," ch'aachin' ehnih.
"When he talks to you, you tell him 'I am constipated,'" she told the stump.
Ay tl'aan ch'aachin', "Nday dootehthoo nǫǫkol?"
Later [the Devil says] to the stump, "Why have you been gone so long?"
"Nidhisdįǫt stsay," yehnih ishyit.
"I am constipated, grandfather," it [the stump] tells him there.
Ishyit doo nah yaanoo: tah staniishyah dat ts'ehxe.
She had run off way out back there, that woman.
Ay'eh Ts'änt'ay du' "Nday jah stsay nidhisdįǫt," ch'aachin' t'eey nih.
That stump said to that Devil, "Here I am my grandpa; I am constipated."
Ay'eh hǫǫ' nih.
That's what it said.
T'axo yiteetsät eh ch'aachin' haɬįǫ'dalnąyh.
Then he pulled it [the rope], and he yanked out the stump.

Ay tl'aan dat ts'ehxe k'eteltthät.
So then he started to run after that woman.
Noo' yik'eh altthäł.
He was running after her way out there.
T'axo yit'ateeshyay eh ch'igot k'ah tąy naan' nadįhnąyh.
Then as he was about to catch up to her, she put the moose knee fat across the trail.
"Mänh įltsayh," yehnih.
"You become a lake," she told it.
MT: "This is why when we drink water, we tell the water, 'we drink grease' when we become woman."
Mänh ts'eegn nidelnąyh.
It turned into a long lake.
Ay'eh ay aanah nake'aahaał dogn' yaanoo' yaa stanlishyah.
Then while he went all the way around it, she got far away from him there.
Ay tl'aan chinxoh yit'aateeshyay eh ch'iithoo tąy stadnįhnąyh.
Later on he again started to catch up with her, and she shoved the stone scraper into the trail.
Tl'aan "Nįįshyeeyh. Tthee ddhäł įltsayh," yehnih ts'ą'
Then she said, "You grow! You become a rock mountain," she told it, and
tthee ddhäł choo nidelnąyh.
it turned into a big rock mountain.
Ay ch'iitsay ch'itsok yeh ts'ehxe dhehxiin eh ay tthee ddhäł deltüüt.
He drilled into that rock mountain with that iron penis that he had killed the woman with.
Yadeltüüt dogn' tth'iitu' idiishyah aashyugn.
While he drilled through it up there, she reached the river down below.

Naagädn taamaagn natidaak.
A Fox was walking on the beach.
Tsayh chih yitl'aadeedlah.
She gave some ochre to him.

"Jin nnatdaktl'äł ha' shaa skechiǫ̨ttheeyh," yehnih.
"I'll pour this on you if you take me across on your tail," she told him.
Ay'eh Naagädn yaa skechiniitthayh.
So the Fox took her across on his tail.
Ay'eh ch'ah Naagädn delt'äl hǫǫ̨ǫ̨ tsayh inadehtl'iidn eh.
And so the Fox is red because she poured ochre on him.
Ay tl'aan yaanaan' tah aahaał du' t'axo dat Ttheedzaan tthee ddhäł adeltüüdn eh
So she was going across there and by then that Devil had drilled through the rock mountain, and
noo' tth'iitu' itshyugn tąy ǫ̨ǫ̨ tsaan' ee'ąą.
down by the river there was dog poop in the trail.
"Jahdu' wuts'ǫ̨shyay nday?" yehnih.
"Has someone passed here?" he says [to the dog poop].
"Læ'e, hahdogn' ts'änh wudinelmbäl dihtth'ign nday," yehnih.
"I don't know; from up above somewhere I heard this rustling noise," it [the dog poop] told him.
MT: "This is the reason we always walk around dog poop the way the sun goes around. The poop can tell a bear or something about where you are."
Ay tsaan' Ts'änt'ay yits'ą' hǫǫheeyh ishyit ts'änh.
That poop was talking to the Devil from there.

§

Noo tth'iitu' idiishyay eh
Then she reached the river way over there and
Naagädn naanohts'ąy natidaak.
a Fox was walking on the other side.
Ay ts'ehxe Naagädn "Hǫǫ' ay nahiidiishyah de' wuch'a' hetl'aa'ondüh de'," yehnih.
That woman tells Fox, "If he reaches the shore there, you should run away from him," she tells him.
"T'iah natdaktl'äł ha' shaa skechiǫ̨ttheeyh," yehnih.
"I'll pour charcoal on you if you take me across on your tail," she tells him.

Du' t'axo taatl'ädn ihaagn eh, "Le' le' le'," nih tah Naagädn yich'a' staa'etdüh.

So he [the Devil] was going out in the middle of the water and it [Fox] says "le', le', le'" while the fox scampered away from him [luring him].

Hitl'aa'etmeek dat Ts'änt'ay.

That Devil swam back ashore.

T'axo tuu yich'inehnaan' eh, t'axo yaa skechiniitthayh ts'ą'.

While he almost drowned in the water, it [Fox] took her across on its tail.

Skenjjshyah tl'aan t'iah inadjhtl'iit.

After she got across, she poured charcoal on him.

Ay ch'ah naagädn dat-sąy hǫǫłjj

So ever since then the Fox is black.

§

Ay tl'aan noo aahaal eh ts'eenät Saa Wunaa eeday ts'ą' ha'jjshyay ay ts'ehxe.

Later on she was walking along, and that woman went up to an old lady who was staying there, the Mother of the Sun.

"Shchaay," nih, kǫhthüh shyiit dhjjdah yehnih.

"My grandchild," she said, "you stay inside the sewing bag," she says to her.

Kǫhthüh shyiit eedah ay tl'aan ay ts'änt'ay Ttheedzaan ishyit yik'eh daniishyah ts'ą'

Later she [the girl] was staying in a sewing bag, as that Devil came in after her.

Ts'eenät udehkat.

He asked the old lady [about her].

"K'aa dineh iin nak-'iin.

"I don't look at people [the Sun's Mother says].

K'aa mbi'ishnay. K'aa jah duugn ni'iihaal."

I don't know. No one stopped here."

Jah ts'ą' wutsjį' wuniit'ayh xu, ch'iitsay ch'itsogn ntthäl' tihshyiła'! Sheh nahǫlnik," yehnih.
"Her smell is leading here! I'll stick the iron penis in your rectum! So you tell me!" he told her.
Ay'eh ch'iitsay ch'itsogn yaa kon' nia' tthidjįtthay eh
He put that iron penis on the fire for her, and
dat Saa Wunaa yits'ą' hatthidalnąyh ts'ą'.
that Sun's Mother stared at him.
Ay Ts'änt'ay łahtthign' ta'uudeełät.
So that Devil just melted away.

Ay'eh ts'ehxe kǫhthüh shyii ts'ą' haa'altthät ts'ą'.
And that woman jumped out of that sewing bag.
All yeh ch'eniithik.
She stirred it all up [the melted Devil].
"Jign, jign ǫǫłe'.
"You become berries" [talking to the melted Devil].
"Tsąą'ttheel ndäl' uułe'."
"Let your blood become highbush cranberries."
"Njhtl'ät ntl'ädn uułe'."
"Let your waist become lowbush cranberries."
"Jign tah ch'inayy' du' ntsogn' uułe'."
"Let your penis become mushrooms among the berries."
"Dankaał du' nxia' uułe'," yehnih.
"Let your testicles become salmonberries," she tells him.
"Njhchǫǫ eh nihnayh eh Ts'ant'ay tth'än' uułe'."
"Let the Devil's bones become rosehips and bearberries."
"Danbaa' eh du' ntthiixąą' uułe'."
"Let your brain become silverberries."
Dankaał eh all yeh łich'eneethät.
She stirred together salmonberries and all the other berries.
All ay ch'ah k'aadu' jign iin ay ts'ą' miihǫǫłiin ch'ant'ay.
And ever since then the berry family was born.

Ay tl'aan t'axo hiidhehxiin eh ts'eenät eh eedah.
And the one [Sun's Mother] who had killed him [the Devil], that old lady was staying there.
Wushyüü łaakay iin elt'eh Saa iin.
She had two sons, that Sun.
Ay'eh nahiindeeł łaahitdeel ts'ą'.
And then they returned from hunting.
"Nee'aat uułe', ts'ehxe neets'ą' ha'ɉshyaay," hiinih.
"The woman who came to us should become our wife," they said.
Ay'eh huu'eh eedah.
And she stayed with them.
Ay dinaa iin ka ittsüh.
She cried for her mother and family.
"Nohshyign kon' maagn tthee deedlay hadɉłeeh tl'aan shyign' wunɉh'ɉh," yehnih.
"Take out those rocks down there by the edge of the fire, and then look downward," she [the old lady] told her.
Shyign wuneh'ay eh.
She looked down [into the real world].
Nohshyugn shyign nän' k'it tah wunaa iin natetdik.
Down there on earth her mother and family were walking around.
MT: "She's not on this earth, she's on a different planet. Laalil took them to another world."
Ay'eh ittsäh "Shnaa iin ts'ą' natushshya'," nih.
And she cried, "I should go back to my mother and them," she said.
Ay tl'aan ay ts'eenät Saa Wunaa tl'uuł yitl'ädn hii'ehchüh ts'ą'.
Next the old lady, the Sun's Mother, tied a rope around her waist.
Nohshyign' tthee hadeedlah tl'aan "Shshyüü iin nashyihtidhahxay hɉit'eh."
She pulled up rocks from below and said, "My sons will kill me [if the woman leaves]."

"Shyüh neh chatnettleek (chąą shyüh) tehchąą de',
She told her, "If wet snow falls on you (that's the sign),
wuts'ą' haatl'a'hųh'a' tl'aan, 'Tsǫǫ ts'eetlät ɮį łanaytee'ąą uh'eey uh'eey,' dǫǫni' de'," yehnih.
you should hold your butt up toward it [to stop the snow], and you should tell it [the sun] this: 'A dog took away … …,'" she told her.[2]
Shyign nän' k'it ts'ą' naadlɮǫ'ɮį'ąą.
Down below a spider web dangled down to the ground.
Ay k'eh ch'ah Tsǫǫ Kelahdzeey natl'uułch'ihtidaagn.
And the Grandmother Spider descended on the rope [web].
Ahdogn ts'änh ay ts'ehxe Saa Wunaa nadlɮǫ'ɮį'aan k'eh ch'a hitdęęy.
From up above, that woman, the Sun's Mother, descended the way they [spiders] do.

§

Ay tl'aan du' nohshyign Nahtsįa ts'ą' chih ha'ɮįshyah.
And then a Wolverine came up from below.
Nahtsįą chih yuuteeniik.
The Wolverine too started to grab her [to rape her].
"Ay ch'ah nahtsįą yuutee'iil ch'a' niɬ'in tsinul'ɮįk," yehnih.
"Let's hide in order to prevent Wolverine from raping her," she told her.
"Niɬ'ii ch'ihnel'ɮį' ay'eh nahshyugn Tl'oh Tthiishyoo' iin tah uudǫhshyoo de' nuukah hǫǫheeyh de'," yehnih.
"When they hide down below, you Grass Tussock People should whistle at him [the Wolverine], when he calls for you," she told her.
Ay dįįnah yaanoo ts'ehxe stąą'eltthät.
Meanwhile, the woman ran far away again.
"Hǫǫ' Ch'uudihshyoo Gaay ndeets'ą', ch'a dįįnay?" nih.
"Hey 'Little Whistler' where are you talking from?" [the girl says].

2. Mary does not understand all of these words. This is an incantation, a phrase to be sung to the sun in bad weather.

"Jahdu'" hiyehnih Tl'oh Tthiishyoo' iin.
"Here," the Grass Tussock People say to him.
Ay'eh hanet-thiit dįįnah t'eey dat ts'ehxe dinaa iin hana'inshyah.
While he [Wolverine] is distracted, that woman's mother came back up.
Wunąą iin hittsüh ts'ą'.
Her mother [and her people] cried.
Huutthi' all łätjeek'ąą xa tthihelshyeeh.
They burned their hair [in mourning] by shaking their heads at the fire.
MT: "They burn their hair so nobody else die pretty soon."
Naa'inshyaay eh dinaa iin eh nǫholnik,
When she returned, she told her mother,
"Laalil nee'eh keenän''ii'ąą.
"Butterfly took us up to another world.
Ch'ishyuuy nän' k'it dats'eedeel ishyit tah shaadeh hihdhehxįį.
We went up to another world and there they killed my older sister.
Shiy shyįį' naa'ishshyah," dinaa iin ehnih.
I am the only one to return," she told her mother.

Huunąą iin eh eedaay eh jahxan chąą ch'intleeh.
She stayed with her mother and then all of a sudden a wet snow fell.
Tehchąą shyüh ch'intleeh.
It started to rain a wet snow.
"Nąą'! Dign stsǫǫ jinän' k'it naashihtiin hǫǫ' hudįį' de' hǫǫ' dǫǫni' de' shehnih."
"Mommy! My grandma [the Spider] up there who brought me back to earth told me what to say if this happens."
"Hanteey' hǫǫ' dįįni'," wunaa yehnih.
"Hurry! Say that," her mother told her.
Ay'eh "Tsǫǫ ts'eetl'ät łįį łanaytee'ąą uh'eey, uh'eey."
And [she sings] "A dog took away … ….."
Ay'eh yaasąą mbeh haadalnąyh.
And a clear sky appeared for her again.
Ishyit k'eshyįį'.
That's all.

Mary with Laura John at a potlatch in Mentasta, 1971. Photo by Andy Tyone.

CHAPTER
5

Shoh Niiduuy eh Qǫnign'
The Story of Bear and Lynx

In this story, the Bear People and the Lynx People are rivals.

Recorded September 16, 1993;corrected Fall 1994. Tape 2B(1).

Niiduuy xa nootidhagnnik.
I'm going to tell about Lynx.

Taamaagn daa' Shoh iin eh, Tsuugn iin eh, Niiduuy iin eh hihdeltth'ih.
The Bear People, the Marten People, and the Lynx People were living at the shore.

Ch'uuxeel eh hihdelxoh ay'eh Shoh Tsuugn gaan' eh xach'ineekat.
They were playing the Grass-Ball game when Bear slapped off the Marten's arm.

Ay Tsuugn gaan' dishyah daa'intąą tl'aan nahxogn jiittheel jį'eh kon'tign' daaneetl'įǫ tl'aan.
He brought that Marten's arm into his house, and he tied it across the doorway as a rattle.

Ditthiign dayniitl'įǫ hiyuutaanign ch'a'.
He tied it onto a beam to keep them from taking it [the arm].

§

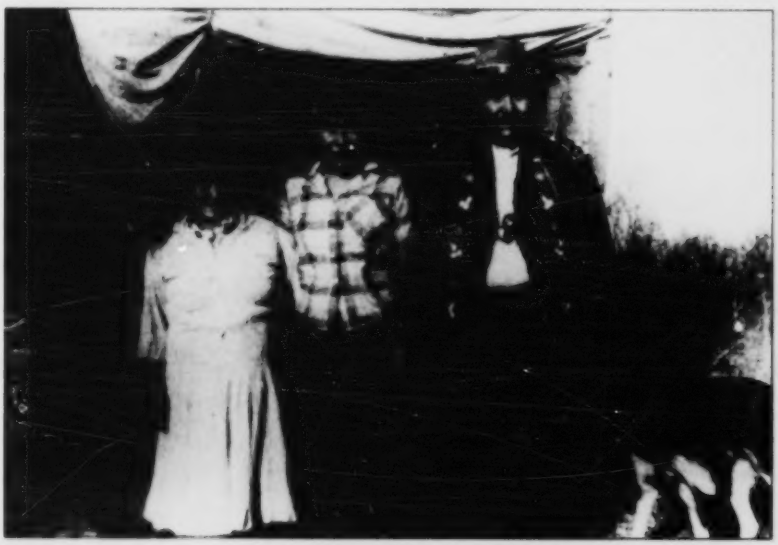
Tsuugn hidettsüü, nahxogn noogaay iin ihdląą ts'ą ditah ɬinahuhnit-'aak.
Marten was whimpering, and out there all the animals were taking turns trying to get it back.

Hiyuuteeniign eh hii'idetniiyh.
They kept trying to get it, but they failed.
Ay'eh Niiduuy "Shiy nahnih."
So Lynx said, "Let me try."
Diłaagąyy' ne' chineht'ǫy tl'aan jiittheel uunayh ts'ą' yitl'uul' k'eenit'üüh tl'aan.
He flicked back his claws, and he grabbed the rattle and then cut the string.
Daniishyah Shoh du' eetjį.
As he went inside, the Bear was sleeping.
Dign' Tsuugn gaan' danattl'uun yitl'uul k'ineet'üüh tl'aan yeh tthiinshyah ts'ą' xa dąą'inshyshah yigaan' yii'ehxał eh.
He had cut the string up there where Marten's arm was lashed, and he ran outside with it and then back inside and he [Lynx] put the arm back on him.
Wugaan' mbjjtnitshye'.
His arm started to grow back.
Ay'eh ch'a Tsuugn gaan' one side mbeh ts'ehłign ts'ąy nk'ul.
And so that's how Marten's arm is short on one side.

§

Shoh ts'iniithädn eh ch'utniishyih hųų'ąą, "doo ch'ent'ay?" nih tah nah'ogn
Bear woke up and he flew into a rage. "Who is that?" he said, and meanwhile
dlaat łaatnigǫǫ nän' łaatnigǫǫ.
he tore up the moss, he tore up the ground.
"Doo ch'ent'ay dąą' nok-'jjl."
"Whoever this is I will do this to you!" [will tear you up, Bear said].
Ay'eh Niiduuy t'üüh naanigǫǫ dilaagąyy' eh.
Then Lynx tore out a cottonwood with his claws.
"Shiy ch'a dąą' ntak-'jjl nän' ditlogn' du' dii xa djh'ay?"
"I'm going to do this to you! Why did you do that to the soft ground?" [Lynx said].

"Shiy du' dichinh t'üüh dąą' tak-'įį.
"I'm going to do what I did to this cottonwood stick.
K'aa ninagnjidn, xanteey' dǫǫ sts'ą' įįhaał," yehnih.
I'm not scared of you; quick, come here to me," he [Lynx] told him.
Shoh yeh neljidn eh yich'a' dishyah dąą'inshyah.
Bear was scared of him, and he went away from him and back into his own house.
Ayshyįį'.
That's all.



Mary with Laura and Bell John by their fish rack in Northway, 1954.

Tät uunlik tl'aan tuu dign' yaa yich'ineethät.
Frog took a cane and he lifted up the water for him.

CHAPTER
6

Taatsaan' Dzänh eh Qǫnign'
Raven and Muskrat Story

This is an especially entertaining story, telling of the importance of several water plants to the Upper Tanana people.

Recorded October 16, 1992; corrected Fall 1994. Tape 1B.

Taatsaan' taamaagn łuugn xa ts'oo dehtąą tl'aan taatsaan' łuugn ts'ą' di'aat ła'ahteeł.

Raven left a spruce by the shore in order to catch some fish, and he [Raven] was bringing his wife over to that fish.

"Łuugn, nän n'aat tay du' n'uusu'," yehnih.

He says to him, "Fish, your wife is sure pretty."

Łuugn tuu shyii ts'änh ha'eltl'üh tl'aan yitdzeey' iitthät ts'ą' nohshyign taa'etdüh.

Fish jumped out from the water and struck him in his heart, and then he slipped back down into the water.

Hǫǫ' dį'.

He did that.

"Łuugn, nän tay n'aat uusu'," yehnih.

"Fish, I wish your wife were as pretty as mine," he [Raven] says to him.

Chinxo łuugn ha'eltl'ųh. Yitdzeey iitthät tl'aan nohshyign' hǫǫ' dį'.

Fish jumped out once again. It struck him in his heart and then he went down as he had before.

T'axo t'axo łuugn hǫǫchaah ha'eltl'ät tl'aan yidzeey' iitthät.

Finally, finally, Fish jumped way up and struck his heart.

T'aneltth'ät mbeh wutnittl'ia.
Then he [Raven] fell over backward, and he blacked out.
Ay'eh tsät taamaagn dehtaan t'ah łuugn nit'atdelnąyh.
There was a stick of wood on the beach that was blocking off the Fish.
Ay'eh nii'etshyaay eh ay'eh yichehtl'üh.
Then he [Raven] got back up, and he clubbed him [the Fish].
"Jah łuugn dhakxjį," di'aat itdeeni.
He was about to tell his wife, "Here, I killed the Fish."
Yikooneh'ąy eh mbǫǫkol.
He looked for her, but she was gone.

Yaa nohshyign wuneh'ąy eh naan' tuu t'aat naan' tah wu'aat łuugn iin nahiyalteeł tsą'
He looked down below for her and across the way, but under the water those Fish People were carrying off his [Raven's] wife.
Nts'ųų' yuułeeh?
What should he do?

Looking toward the south with Scottie Creek in the foreground. The mountain *Tthee Shyok* 'hollow rock' is in the background. The lake at the base of the mountain is called *Xaal Männ'* 'least cisco whitefish lake.' Photo by Wayne Towriss courtesy of Yukon Native Language Centre.

Naxogn taamaagn natidaak, "Jah nts'ǫǫ'?"
He goes around the beach there, "What is this?"
"Tuu t'aat nts'ǫǫ' uhshya'?" niithänh.
"How can I go under water?" he thinks.
Tuu maagn mänh maagn natidaagn eh
He goes to the edge of the water, to the lake shore and
Naaxąy chih daashyign eedah.
the Frog also is sitting down below.
Naaxąy xa niniishyah.
He went up to the Frog.
"Nts'ǫǫ' eh tuu t'aat na'ǯdaak?" yehnih.
"How do you go under the water?" he says to him.
Tät uuniik tl'aan tuu dign' yaa yich'ineethät.
He [Frog] took a cane and he lifted up the water for him [Raven].
Tuu shch'aadiinak xa' gaay ay'eh
The water raised up a little and,
"Tay' dign', ne' shyign wunok-'ǯ'," nih.
"A little higher, let me look back underneath there," he says.

Naan' ch'itohtl'ädn tah wu'aat Łuugn iin eh hihdeltth'ih ts'ą' Naaxąy udehkat,
Across and out in the middle the Fish People were staying with his wife, and he asked the Frog,
"Nts'ǫǫ' eh xay na'ǯdaagn?"
"How do you go around during the winter?"
"Nän' shyiit ihdaagn eh xay sheh hułeek," Taatsaan' ehnih.
"I go inside the ground when it gets winter on me," he tells Raven.
Ay tl'aan nah'ogn gǫ tthiit'aagn (ch'it'aan') ch'ixa' ay yaa nehtsǯ ts'ą'
Later outside he picked some fluff on top of the fireweed for him, and
nän' shyiit yit'oh ehtsǯ tl'aan dąą' "nshyah hudhaktsǯ xa', tuu shaa nidihniih."
after he made his [Frog's] nest in the ground, he said, "I made you a house, so lift up the water for me."

Nay eh hǫǫ' tuu yaa nidihniik.
Saying this, he lifted up the water for him.
Ts'oo k'ąy' jį'eh tuu shyiit mbuu taałeel.
The spruce and the willow would become the plants that grow in water.
Jį'eh yaa nitniidlah tl'aan:
And he [Frog] gave them to him [Raven]:
(1) tuht'ąąy, (2) tehts'ogn, (3) kelaaxia, (4) kelt'üüt, (5) nihts'įį́ł t'aann'.
'water leaf,' 'underwater spruce,' 'round foot limb,' 'cut-out foot pattern,' and "muskrat candy."

Tuu yaa shch'adihniik, tuu t'aa'įshyah.
He lifted up the water for him, and he went under the water again.
Ay'eh nign' wu'aat eedaay dänh ts'ą' aahaał ay dzänh hinaa hel'įh.
And he went back upland where his wife is staying, and they [the Fish People] are keeping the Muskrat as a slave.
Ay Łuugn iin ts'ą' wu'aat chinel'įį tl'aan dzänh chehmbiah xa tsät ittheeł.
Those Fish People had hid his wife away, and the Muskrat was chopping wood in order to cook.
Ay'eh yichįį'ay' tehtthįį́ł tįį' eenän' eh tehtthįį́ł tįį' k'i'inxoł.
So he hexed the handle of the stone axe, and the axe handle broke in two.
Ay xa dzänh itsüü:h.
Due to this the Muskrat cried.
Ay'eh yaa niniishyah Taatsaan'.
So he went up to him, that Raven.
"Diixat dįįnay?" yehni.
"How come you are crying?" he [Raven] said to him.
"Jah chįį'ay tehtthįį́ł tįį' k'enakxol.
"I broke the handle of this axe [Muskrat said].
Hiixa mbaa ła' t'ay k'aa hǫǫsǫǫ shk'ahnehta'.
Due to this they will treat me really badly.

Water Plants of the Upper Tanana as Described by Mary Tyone

tehgįǫ' class of water plants, *literally* 'fireweed in the water.'

1. **tuht'ąąy** pond weed, a long leaf plant (a moose food) *(Potamogeton gramineus), literally* 'water leaf.' "It grows in lakes in deep water. Its leaves look like those willows with long leaves. It's a moose food, but we don't ~~eat~~ them."

2. **tehts'ogn** bladderwort *(Utricularia vulgaris), literally* 'underwater spruce.' "Looks like a little spruce with pine cones on it. Its weed looks like brussels sprouts. It has like a cushion at the end of its leaf. It grows in lakes in deep water. It's a moose food but people don't use it."

3. **kelaaxia** white-leafed water lily, dwarf water lily *(Nymphaea tetragona), literally* 'round foot limb.' "It grows in lakes. It has flowers that look like little marbles. Moose eat them but we don't eat them."

4. **kelt'üüt** (Tetlin and Northway dialects), **xalt'aadi** (Upper Nabesna dialect) yellow pond lily *(Nuphar polysepalum), literally* 'cut-out foot pattern.' "We use the roots for medicine. The root looks like a block of wood. We boil it and drink the juice. It is good for a chest cold."

5. **nihts'įįł** (Nothway dialect), **nihts'iil** (Tetlin dialect) watermilfoil, "muskrat candy" *(Myriophyllum spicatum), stem analysis uncertain; also called* **dzänh tsaa'** "muskrat's cache." "It grows under water. Summertime we go swim and we dig with our feet for it and it floats out and we eat them while we swim. It tastes like sugar. It's really a good plant. You can eat as many as you want. When we find a muskrat den, we dig it out. Sometimes in winter we dig it out and put it in a dishpan, put hot water in it and wash it off, sit to table and eat it. It looks like your two fingers when you make 'peace' at somebody, and it's got a head and a black nose on it."

Hiixa shtidhahxjj ch'alí' diishyaagn" nih.
They may try to kill me for what happened," he says.
"Ay'eh dąą' ntihłiił, chjj'ay tjj' naa nataktsay ha'."
"Well, I'll fix it. I'll repair the axe handle for you" [Raven said].
"Doo huu'eh ch'ishyuuy t'ílah huu'eh nįh'įh?" yehnih.
He [Raven] said to him, "Do you see someone else with them?"
"Ch'ishyuuy huu'eh eedah."
"Someone different is staying with them" [Muskrat said].
"Nts'ą' hįjdjj'?"
"What did they do?" [Raven asks].
"Chakmbiah tah tuuthäł tthidjjtl'ik tah än' tthiigaan'helshyeek tl'aan
[Muskrat said] "When I started to cook something, the soup would spill on the fire, and they would run outside there and then
tuu nanetk'jjgn eh daahetdik wutithign eh ay huu'eh yiidaay huuk'eh daa'itdaak."
the water evaporated away, and they [the Fish] came back in, and a while later the one who was staying with them [Raven's wife] came back in after them."
Dzänh hǫǫ' "Nantagnteeł.
So he says to Muskrat, "I'll bring you back.
Sheh natjjdaał ha', sh'aat huuniik.
You will come back with me; they took my wife.
Sheh shk'anįhta' ts'ą' shaa sh'aat na'uhniih.
You can look after me and I will get back my wife.
Ch'įhmbiah tl'aan tuu ntsiin tthiidǫhtl'iit hittheh tl'aan dąąhindeeł tl'aan de' tay' hǫǫchaah tuuthäł tthiidǫhtl'iit de'," yehnih.
After you cook you should first pour a little soup on the fire, and then after they come back in, you should pour really a lot of soup on the fire," he [Raven] said to him.
Hah'ogn shyah k'üü chinel'jj, Łuugn shyah k'üü.
He [Raven] is hiding beside the house, by the side of the Fish's house.
Ay'eh tuuthäł xa'xuh wutthiidįhtl'iit.
And he [Muskrat] spilled a little soup on the fire.

Tthiigaan'hilshyah tl'aan k'aadii dąąhindeeł.
They ran out and then they went back in.
Ay'eh dzänh hǫǫchaah de' tuuthäł tthiidįhtl'iit ts'ą'
And then Muskrat spilled a lot of soup on the fire and
yaa'än' tah łahtthign' tthihniideeł, tthiigaan'hilshyah tl'aan.
they all went out and ran away.
"Dat sh'aat na'uudhihniik de' shttheh t'eey tǫǫshya'," dzänh ehnih.
"When I get my wife back, you should go out ahead of me," he says to the Muskrat.
Dzänh tuuthäł tthidįhtl'iidn eh all tthiigaan'hilshyah.
The Muskrat spilled soup on the fire and they all ran out.
Dąąhindeeł ch'ik'eh na'aadaał, wu'aat.
As they came back in, she was coming behind them, his wife.

Taatsaan' di'aat na'uuniik dzänh uttheh.
Raven took back his wife in front of Muskrat.
Yaanoo tah nagaan'halshyeek.
They [Raven and his wife] ran way out ahead.
"Tehts'ogn chih st'adehxak nįįshyeeh," yehnih.
"Grow into 'water spruce' to block the way," he [Raven] says to it.
Tuht'ąąy įį'eh tah ay tah niishyeeh nilthayh tsą' ay tah hiholdät.
The moose food ['water leaf'] grew fast and meanwhile they [Fish] got tangled up in it.
Diinah t'eey niithaadn k'eh ni'itdaak.
Meanwhile he stopped a long way away.
Tehgįǫ' įį'eh tah st'adiłeeh.
He also blocked the way with some 'water firewood.'
T'axo taamaagn nii'inshyay eh "degee," yehnih.
Then he stopped at the beach again, and he says to him [Frog], "Way up there."
MT: "Raven is speaking in Ahtna here."
Naaxąy tuu dign' yaa yich'ineetaak ts'ą' di'aat eh dzänh eh hitl'aa'eltįį.
Frog lifted up the water with a stick and he [Raven] brought out his own wife and Muskrat too.

Ay tl'aan dzänh ts'ą' hǫǫheeyh:
Afterward he [Raven] talks this way to Muskrat:
"Xay tah ndąą' tįjdįįł tah dzänh nihts'įįł ka yaa nooni'įą."
"In winter when you will do this, you [Muskrat] can trample around for the 'muskrat food.'"
Jin taanign' yitąy huxąą ts'ą'
Above the shore here he [Muskrat] makes his trails and
aynign' nihts'įįł yaa łatnehdogn itsah.
up there he [Raven] buried the compacted 'muskrat food' for him.
"Dąą' tįh'įįl kjįy' tįjdaał," yehnih.
"You will do this and you will live on it," he [Raven] tells him.
Dzänh noogn mänh k'it dzänh kjįy' įį'eh tąy yaa ixąą.
So he [Raven] made the lodges way out in the lake for Muskrat and trails too.
"Dąą' tįjdįįl dänh nachįį'aał.
"Whenever you do this, you can eat [Raven says].
Nohshyign' tuu shyii ts'ą' sǫ' natonshya', nihtidhahxe' xa'," yehnih.
Don't go back down in the water or they [Fish] will kill you," he [Raven] says to him.
Tl'aan taamaagn mänh maagn Dzänh dahk'eet įį'eh huxąą.
Later on he [Raven] also made the Muskrat's den on the lake shore.
"Jin k'it nachįį'aał," yehnih.
"You will eat upon this," he [Raven] tells him.
Ay'eh ch'ah dzänh tänh k'it tah dzänh dikįį' ixaan.
And so that's why Muskrat makes his houses out on the ice.
Ay'eh Taatsaan' yaa hǫǫxąą nign' ch'ah dzänh nihts'įįł itsay įį'eh tah k'aadu'.
And that's how Raven made a place for him up on land, and cached away the 'muskrat food,' just as it is now.
MT: "That's his summer table."
Ayshyįį'.
That's all.

CHAPTER
7

Yaachoh Dineh Nidihtįį
When 'Big Sky' Picked Up a Man

Stories of a giant named Big Sky are found throughout the northern Athabaskan languages. Mary's story begins following an episode in which the enemy giant named Gol' has killed Yaachoh's family.

Recorded September 5, 1991; corrected Fall 1994. Tape 2,A,2.

Yaachoh wuts'enay dineh nuun kah ts'iit kah natidaagn.
The one we call Big Sky came upon a man who was hunting for a porcupine.

Nuun shyah wushyii įįshyay.
He [the man] went into the porcupine's house.

Idaniishyah.
He entered it [while *Yaachoh* stayed outside].

"Stthuuy, aan sheh na'įįdaał," yehnay eh yineljit yich'a'itsüh.
"My grandchild! Come on, come back with me," he *[Yaachoh]* said to him and he [the man] was scared of it [the porcupine] and he cried out.

"Shduugn' gąyh ndatdakthik," yehnih.
"I'll block you off with my dry shit [rock]," he *[Yaachoh]* tells him.

Tthee datnihnąyh.
He blocked it [the entrance to the den] with a rock.

Ay'eh łąąy eh niljiidn eh.
And he [the man] became really frightened.

"Stsay nts'ą' ha'uhshya'," yehnih.
"My grandfather, I'll come up to you," he [the man] tells him.

Yits'ą' ha'jįshyah.
He came up to him from below.
"Tuu choh maagn shetl'ach'iheexaan.
[*Yaachoh* says] "They killed them on me [killed my wife and family] by the shore of the big water [the ocean].'
Sheh shk'įą' ch'įįxąą. Sheh na'įįdaał," yehnih.
On account of me, he [the one called *Gol'*] killed the ones with me. You come back with me," he *[Yaachoh]* told him.
Nayteltįį.
He took him back.

§

Gol' wuts'enay ts'ą' hahįįdeeł.
They went to the one we call *Gol'*.[1]
Ay'eh niłk'iheltsįį.
They look alike *[Yaachoh* and *Gol']*.
Ndeey wutsay ts'ą' hits'etniign.
He [the man] did not know which one was his grandfather.
"Stsay ndeey nän?"
"Grandfather, which one are you?"
"Shiy," xaxat Gol'.
"It is me," that other guy *Gol'* said.
"Shiy shiy ch'ah ntsay diht'eh," yehnih.
"It is me! I am your grandfather," he *[Gol']* told him.
Ay'eh Gol' yikeetth'ee' k'iineettheeł seeyh eh.
And then he *[Yaachoh]* severed *Gol'*'s Achilles tendon with a knife.
Ay'eh wutsay uyįhxał yidhehxįį.
Then his real grandfather threw him down and killed him.

1. *Gol'* is the giant who had previously killed *Yaachoh's* family.

§

Yaachoh Yaachoh Gol' dhehxiin tl'aan yishyax ts'ą' aahaal eh
After *Yaachoh* killed *Gol'*, he went to his house and
"nday ch'itay nday hudąy?" nih.
she *[Gol''s* wife] said, "I wonder where the old man is?"
Tthee choh tthits'utthedihnayh, haanän'hǫǫshyił ts'ą' don' don' don' unän' k'it.
She shoved out a large rock and he ducked and it fell plunking on the ground.
Ay'eh yitl'e' jjshyah.
And he made love with her.
Tuu tth'iitu' wushyiits'änh ha'jjłąyh, dzänh ushyiit ha'al'eel.
Water like the Tanana River flowed out from inside her and muskrat [-sized lice] swam out from inside her.
"Stsay, dzänh shtidhehxjj."
"Grandfather, the muskrat [lice] are about to kill me!" [the grandchild said].
"Shtthuuy jah shtthiit'aagn dadhjjdah.
"Grandchild, sit up on my head.
Nde' shthaa jhxak," yehnih.
"Here, throw it [the lice] into my mouth," he told him.
Chih yiche' eh yithaa yehxak dzänh nehdzon'.
And he threw it [the lice] into his mouth by his tail, and he popped the muskrat [the giant lice] in his teeth.
Ay'eh yi'aat chi' dhehxjj.
And so he also killed his *[Gol''s]* wife.

§

Tl'aan wuts'jjkeey, uts'jjkeey iin taamaagn shyah shyiit tth'aał shyiit nahdeltth'ih.
Later his *[Gol''s]* children were staying on the shore in a house in a cradle.
Dineh choh hjjłjj.
They were giant people.

Ishyit huudahnįįdeel eh "K'angot xa', k'angot xa'," hinih tah seeyh łahalshyeel.

As they came in blocking them off, they said "I'll stab you, I'll stab you" [talking in baby-talk] while they were carrying knives.

Huutthiixąą' chaats'oh'ishyił.

He poked through their brains with his finger.

Yaachoh huutthiixąą' chaats'oh'ishyił tl'aan huutthiixąą' ettleeh.

Yaachoh poked a finger through their brains, and then he sucked out their brains.

Ay tl'aan taamaagn nahtetdeel eh, tsa' tsa' chih xu'eh ha'įįmbaak.

Later on they went back to the shore, and a beaver also came out to fight with them.

Tsa' yiche' k'ii'itddhäł.

He *[Yaachoh]* chopped the beaver's tail in two.

Tl'aan ay wutthuuy, "Stsay ts'eldeel nt'eh," yehnih.

And then his grandson said to him, "Grandfather, this is for us to eat."

Yich'a' tsa' che' łahtthign' ta'įhdeeł.

Keeping the beaver tail from him, he [*Yaachoh*'s grandson] threw them all in the water.

Ts'ehłign yich'a' tineh'įį.

He [the grandchild] hid one from him.

Delt'ia eh "Oknayh nah," nih.

He roasted it for himself, and "Here, let me taste it," he [the man] says.

Yehnay eh "Oh! elkąyh łaan, oh elkąyh łaan ta'akdeel," nih.

He tasted it and he said, "Oh, it's really tasty, what I threw in the water is really tasty."

Tsa' che' kah tii'itdaak.

He dove back into the water for the beaver tail.

Tuu choh shyiit.

Into the big water.

Ts'ehłign shyįį' na'uudil'ąą.

He found only one.

Ay ts'ehłign heetl'aa'et-'aan chih eht'eh.
He is roasting the other one that he had brought back ashore.
Nayjj'aał tl'aan chinxo nahtetdeeł.
He ate it and they went around again.
Noo haadäl eh
They were going way out, and
yaa du' nadotnjjk'ul ts'ą' wutthiit'aagn.
the sky was too low for the top of his head.
Wutthiit'aagn wutthiixa' łahtthign' xa'atts'änh xah.
That's how the hair on the top of his head all wore off.
Yaa eh ni'eeshyah tl'aan,
After he got up in the sky,
yaa, yaa di:gn' tah yaa yit'anihshyąą.
the sky had to move higher up.
Ayxa' ch'ah Yaachoh hiyehnay.
That is why they call him 'Big Sky.'

§

Tät tät eh natätjetjj.
He went around with a cane.
T'axo naadodn chihuuteexąą.
Just then ants were about to kill them off.
Ay chih naadodn chiy yitl'a' k'ii'itddhäł yitl'ädn naan' ik'ii'itddhäł.
He chopped that ant's butt and chopped it across its waist.
Ay'eh ch'ah naadodn wutl'ädn wudjjtsuul ts'ą' wutl'a' miideet'ay.
That is why the ant's waist is small and its butt just hangs onto its body.
Ay tl'aan Yaachoh t'axo dishyah nii'inshyay eh
And later Big Sky stopped at his own house and
Yaachoh ditädn yaa niiniitąą.
Big Sky brought a cane to him [the grandchild].
Tl'aan, "Noo wunidjjtthayh ts'ą',
Then [*Yaachoh* says], "Stick it in [the ground] out in front, and then
nduu tinixüh niign ay niign noo' na' tjjhaak.
you keep on going in whatever direction that it falls.

Tl'aan neh ts'idaahuudit'egn, tl'aan tay' wuniidįjtthayh ts'ą' ay niign nduu tinixüh niign ch'a nnąą iin ts'ą' ch'a taadiil," yehnih.

If it looks odd to you, you stick it in again, and whichever direction it falls will be the way to go to your mother and the family," he *[Yaachoh]* told him.

§

T'axo dinąą iin ts'ą' haa'atshyah.

Then he [the grandson] went back up to his mother and the family.

Huudia' tsät ka'iiha'.

Their sister had gone out for wood.

Tsät nadat-łio k'i'įjshyah.

He came upon her dragging back wood.

Tsät yich'a'uuton'.

He tugged onto the wood.

Yik'e'e yuuton' eh tsät eet'ay deh'įh.

He held it back from her, and she tugged on the wood.

Ay'eh tsät noo yeh yich'inįjshyil eh wut'adalnayh.

He pushed the wood forward and she fell down.

Ne' wuneh'ay eh chih mboonüü,

She looked back and saw her older brother again,

"Shoonüü!" Ahnoo tah ditsädn ch'a' natelttthät.

"My brother!" She ran back from her wood out there.

Dinaa iin ts'ą' dinaa iin hadąą'iltthät.

She ran back inside to her mother and her family.

"Shoonüü ts'ą' ha'ihshyah!"

"I found my brother!"

Yaachoh wutthuuy dinaa iin xa na'inshyay eh huunaa dzihelshyeeyh.

As Big Sky's grandson returned to his mother's people, they were dancing a mourning dance.

Dogn huutthiixa' łahtthign' etl'atjeek'ąą ts'ą' haa'atshyah.

They had already burned off all their hair when he came back.

MT: "They had begun mourning his death, by tossing their hair toward the fire."

CHAPTER
8

Ch'ǫǫt'üüdn Ch'aachin' Shyiit Eedah
When Horsefly was Living in a Stump

This is a funny story about the bothersome horsefly Ch'ǫǫt'üüdn, 'the one that cuts.'

Recorded November 22, 1994. Tape 2B(4).

Ch'ǫǫt'üüdn xa nootidhagnnik.

I am going to tell about the Horsefly.

Ch'ǫǫt'üüdn ch'aachin' shyiit, ch'ixia' dichin ch'aachin' taamaagn nidee'aay shyiit eedah.

The Horsefly sat inside a tree stump that was standing by the beach, in 'an egg stump.'

MT: "A dry tree with bird nest holes in it."

Dineh iin eldeeł, dineh iin ch'ixia' ka hihtihaagn

The people were eating, and they went out for eggs

huu'ǫǫkol.

but they would disappear.

Tehtthǫ́ł tǫ́' di'eh'ą́ą tl'aan

He had an axe handle inside the stump with him, and

dineh iin ch'ixia' eh kehtiihaak tah tehtthǫ́ł eh huu'ichehkak ay tl'aan huu'eldeeł.

when the people would climb the tree for the eggs, he would chop them with the axe, and then he would eat them.

Noo' hǫǫ' hidǫ' dineh iin ch'ixia' ka hihtihaak ts'ą́' huu'ǫǫkol.

They kept on doing that; the people went for eggs but they would disappear.

Ay'eh t'axo Taatsaan', "Shiy t'ah ch'ixia' ka tuhshya' hą'."
And so Raven said, "Let me go for the eggs."
Ch'ixia' ka tsiishyah.
He pretended to go for the eggs.
Dign' ch'ichin' ch'ixia' ch'ichin' nidee'ay ke'iishyah.
He climbed way up the 'egg stump' [the tree with the nest holes].
Hǫǫ' Ch'ǫǫt'üüdn tehtthi̱i̱ł eh yits'ą' "Oooo! Shta' mbaazee!"
And there was Horsefly with the stone axe, "Oh my father's nephew!"
MT: "Raven talks in Ahtna here."
"Ii̱, ndehdąą' tah shta' yaa naxalnign."
"So, that's the one my father told about long ago" [Horsefly said].
"Shta' mbaazee łaan duudi̱i̱'."
"You must really be the one that is my father's nephew" [Raven said].
"Nta' wuhüü la diht'eh hą' di̱i̱ni'?" Ch'ǫǫt'üüdn yehnih.
"How come you say that I am your father's nephew?" Horsefly said to him.
"Oooh aydu' k'aa wudziiy ch'ehuuheel duuni'."
"Oooh, he says that he has no one to tell him stories" [Raven said].
"Shta' wuhüü ch'a di̱i̱t'ay," Taatsaan' yehnih.
"You are my father's nephew," Raven tells him.
Yits'ą' elshyak ay'eh, "Dǫǫ shaa dzena'i̱i̱haayh.
He lied to him and [Raven said], "Come on down here to me.
Nił'eł dzultth'i'," eh
Let's sit together," and
Ch'ǫǫt'üüdn yaa dzena'i̱i̱shyah tl'aan yi'eh eedah.
so Horsefly came to him and sat with him.
Nił'eh nahihholnign ay'eh Taatsaan' k'i̱i̱y ts'eyh thaayh ts'ayh Ch'ǫǫt'üüdn xa ehtsi̱i̱ tl'aan.
They told each other stories, and Raven made for Horsefly a birchbark canoe made out of sand.

"Dit'ah chih ts'eyh doo niłxa stats'inkǫ̨ de' kah ts'ayh eh mänh k'it tsuudeeł," yehnih.
"Let's go out on the lake in canoes to see who can paddle the fastest," he [Raven] tells him.
Ts'ayh eh noo' ts'itoxtl'ädn Ch'ǫǫt'üüdn niniikiin eh
So Horsefly paddled way out in the middle in the canoe and
"Thaayh ts'eyh na'ǫǫdleeyh."
[Raven says] "Let the canoe turn back into sand."
Xahshyign kaagn wuts'ay' all taa'uudeełät mänh shyiit.
And his whole canoe dissolved on the surface and went down into the lake.

Ay tl'aan "Ooo hetl'anokteel shyign'."
Later [Raven says], "Oh! Let me take you to shore."
Taatsaan' mbaa nits'eniikǫ̨.
Raven paddled up to him.
Ts'ayh nädn yitthi' k'enihtsaat.
At the prow of the boat he cut his [Horsefly's] head off.
Shyign' tah tiniiłaat ts'ą' yitthi' dineey iin ts'ą' na'at-'aał.
He [Horsefly] sank into the water, and he [Raven] brought his head back to the people.
"Jah ch'ah mbaa natsühtuu' ch'inidhatch'iadn."
"This is what you have cried tears for until your eyes are red."
MT: "You know how people cry many times, that Ch'ǫǫtüüdn makes people cry lots."
Ch'ǫǫt'üüdn tthi' huu'eh datdzehnąyh.
He threw the Horsefly's head in to them.
Ch'ǫǫt'üüdn du' ay'eh xa ch'a huutthi' kol wunaagn' shyii' hǫǫłiin.
And so that is why now the Horsefly has no head, but just has eyes inside its body.
Ch'ǫǫt'üüdn, Ch'ǫǫt'üüdn hii'itnii'ąą ay tl'aan.
So after that time they named him *Ch'ǫǫt'üüdn* 'the one that cuts.'
MT: "And that is why when he bites you he cuts you really bad."

Ditthi' yik'eh nehtl'uul naaniits'ą' chįį'ąąy eh aahaał.
With his hair braided like Mosquito Man's, he was walking down there with an axe.

CHAPTER
9

Ch'itth'ąy Dineey Qǫnign'
The Mosquito People Story

This brief and witty children's tale is about two young men who were hunting together when they got separated.

Recorded September 27, 1992; corrected Fall 1994. Tape 2.A.3.

Ch'itth'ąy dineey chiił keey iin łaakay diniign kah naxach'ihdelshyeegn ts'ą' ha'ɉshyah.

Mosquito Man came upon two young men who were hunting for a moose.

Yitidhehxiin eh yich'a' ts'oo ke'iishyah tl'aan

He [Mosquito Man] was about to kill him [one boy] and so he [the boy] climbed a spruce to keep away from him, and

di:gn ts'oo tthiit'aagn tah yich'a' da'eedah.

he sat way up on top of the spruce to keep away from him.

Dat ch'itth'ąy dineey du' yeh tachineetthee ł.

That Mosquito Man started to chop down the tree with him on it.

Tay' ts'oo dittheeł tthehtthɉił eh ay'eh

He chopped the spruce some more with a stone axe, and

"Shoonüü!"

[the boy in the tree says] "My older brother!"

Ch'itth'ąy dineey, "Noonüü lah tth'uudhiht'ay."

Mosquito Man [says], "I am your older brother."

"Yaa' ąą' shoonüü ch'ah dɉit'ay."

"Well, yes, you are my older brother."

Tsät ittheeł ts'ą'
He [Mosquito Man] chops the dry tree and
"Shoonüü!"
"My older brother!" [the boy in the tree hollers].
"Noonüü lah diht'ay?"
"Am I your older brother?" [Mosquito Man asks].
"Ąą', shoonüü dįįt'eh."
"Yes, you are my older brother" [the boy says].
The boy has tricked Mosquito Man, who is not very bright.

Ayts'ą' mboonüü idąąniishyah.
So then his [real] older brother arrived back there.
Aanogn' ts'änh yineh'ąy eh yik'eh ditthi' nehtl'uuł tl'aan,
Looking down at him from upland he [the brother] braided his hair like his [to look like Mosquito Man] and
ditthi' yik'eh nehtl'uul naaniits'ą' chįį'ąąy eh aahaał.
with his hair braided like his [Mosquito Man's], he was walking down there with an axe.

The campsite and village of High Cache about three miles up Scottie Creek, called *Tayh Tsäł T'aat* 'beneath little hill.' Photo by Wayne Towriss courtesy of Yukon Native Language Centre.

"Än' nän k'oo! Ch'idach'oktseeyh xa," yehnih.
"Go away, you! You might take my food [the boy] from me," he [Mosquito Man] told him.
"Noonüü diht'eh," yehnih.
"I am your older brother," he [the older brother] told him.
"Shoonüü łah dįįt'ay," yehnih.
"You are my older brother," he [Mosquito Man] told him.
He agrees and is completely bewildered.
"Ąą'" yehnih. Yi'eh ts'oo ittheeł.
"Yes," he [the older brother] told him. And he chops the spruce with him.
Xa'xu chįį'ąąy yintsįį kat nihnayh.
Then he [the older brother] barely touched the axe against his [Mosquito Man's] nose.
Mįįtsįį k'it däł na'įįłąyh dįįtsįį k'it däł ishyit nayetnąą.
Blood was flowing down from his nose, and he drank his own blood.
Aydįį naht'eey dat dineh yichehkaał.
So it turns out that the man [the older brother] was chopping him [Mosquito Man].

Ay'eh ch'ale' k'aadu' Ch'itth'ąy iin ts'ihuhniiniign.
This is why nowadays the Mosquito People are so stupid.
Naxan dat dineh wutthi' ichehkaal eh.
That man chopped his head off.

CHAPTER
10

Dlign eh Tthil Niłk'eechinh Ch'ixat-'ąą
When Tree Squirrel and Ground Squirrel Made a Trade

The subtlety of the story comes with the trade of their names as well as their country, which takes place after the song is sung.

Recorded July 28, 1994. Tape 2B(2).

Dlign eh tthil niłk'eechinh dinän' niłk'eechinh xat-'ąą.

The Tree Squirrel and the Ground Squirrel traded their land one time.

Tthil ntsuul hihttheh.

Long ago the Arctic Ground Squirrel was small.

Dlign dlign ddhäl' ddhät k'it dlign ddhät tah huunänn' hǫǫłįį ts'ą' tthil du' ts'oo tah yaatthiit ts'oo tah huunänn' hǫǫłįį.

And the Tree Squirrels had their country up in the mountains, while the Ground Squirrels had their country in the low country in the spruce trees.

Ay'eh tthil ch'iitay nchaah ts'ą' ts'oo tah son' natetkay eh

But the Ground Squirrel was still too big to be able to jump around in the spruces and

Dlign eh niłxa xindeeł.

he met with the Tree Squirrel.

"Nign' nän' niłk'ints'ut-'aay," yehnih.

"Let's trade for the high country," the Ground Squirrel said to him.

Ddhät, ddhät dlign diddhäl' tthil tl'a'įį'ąą tl'aan tthil du' dits'ogn' dlign tl'a'įį'ąą.

The Tree Squirrel gave the Ground Squirrel his mountains, and then the Ground Squirrel gave the Tree Squirrel his spruce trees.

§

Ay tl'aan ddhäł tah dlign niniishyaay eh tthän' noonel'ay eh yaatthän' ts'oo ddhäł neh'įh.

When the *dlign* had moved to the mountains, he would look down to the flat country and he would see spruce mountains.

MT: "Until this song, Dlign and Tthil had not changed their names."

"Ay'eh hadatjak-'ąą"

"So that's why I sing a lonesome song:"

Yaatthän' shiy ts'ogee, ąą ąą.

Down below are my trees.

Yaatthän' shiy ts'ogee, ąą ąą.

Down below are my trees.

Tthil chih nign' wuneh'ay, dlign tthil ch'ale'

Also the *Tthil* would look up above, and he too would sing:

Yaatthän' shiy ts'ogee nay ....

Down below is my spruce ....

Dlign chih nign' noonel'ay eh ddhäł tah

But now the Tree Squirrel looks back up to the upland and sings

Yaanign' shiy ddhäli, yąą ąą

Up above are my mountains

Yaanign' shiy ddhäli ąą ąą, nih.

Up above are my mountains.

MT: "Now they had traded their names as well as their country."

Ddhäł nił k'eechinh xat-'ąą, ts'ogn ddhäl eh tthee ddhäł eh nił k'ichinh xat-'ąą.

So they traded for the mountains; they exchanged the mountains for the spruce.

Ayxa ch'a dlign ntsuul xa, tthil du' xa' gaay nchaah.

And this is why the Tree Squirrel is small and the Ground Squirrel is just a little larger.

Ayshyįį'.

That's all.

CHAPTER
11

Dlign Mba' Hehk'aayh ts'ą'
When the Tree Squirrels Cut Fish

MT: "This is why today we watch what we say about our food."

Recorded July 28, 1994; Tape 2B(3).

Dign' dlign dlign iin łuugn hehk'aayh.
The Tree Squirrel People were up above slicing fish.
Łuugn delt'äl hehk'aay ts'ą'
They cut salmon and
mba' ndląą hehgąyh.
they dried lots of dry fish.
Mba' hehgąyh shiin uudih.
They dried fish all summer.
Ay'eh t'axo łuugn eegąy eh nän' tah hihtideel eh xa łuugn tsaak'eet hihųųxąą ts'ą'
When they dried all the fish, they went out in the country [to hunt], and they made fish caches and
tsaak'eet mba' gąyh naaxeełheldik.
they packed the dry fish to the caches.

Ay aashyogn mba' nänn' naa'įįxał tl'aan tsaak'ee łuugn daatneldok hihuułaak.
Down below [on the trail] the backbone of a dry fish had fallen down after they had filled the caches all full of fish.
Ay'eh dlign ch'ik'eh łuugn na'atxeeł.
And a Tree Squirrel was packing back a fish walking behind the others.

Ashyogn mba' nänn' tąy eetąą.
A fish backbone was lying on the trail down below.
"Jin du' ndeey naa'uta' chinatdet-'aay?" nih ts'ą'.
"Where are we going to put this one?" he said.
Naan' dike' eh yeketdelthąyh.
He kicked it across and out of the way with his foot.

Ay'eh łuugn heetsaay eh xay huu'eh naatsiił'įįshyah ts'ą'
So they stored the fish and it snowed heavily on them, and
łahtthign' ditsaa hatsaahiłeeyh.
they opened up all of their caches.
Mbät ehdänh huutooniithät.
They started to starve.
Ditsaa hatsaahiłeeyh eh all ch'ilaht'įǫ shyįį' nłįį.
When they opened the caches, there was only tree bark in there.

Mary at Gakona Lodge in 1958 with two moose in the background.
Photo by Andy Tyone.

Mba' łahtthign' ch'ilaht'įǫ eltsįį ts'ą'
All of the dry fish had turned into tree bark, and
mbät ehdänh łahtthign' hįįłaak.
they all died of starvation.

§

Dlign tthitah hǫǫhaay eh ay shyįį honayh.
That one Tree Squirrel that had spoken previously is the only one that lived.
Jah duugn ts'oo k'it dzeeh tl'ąyh įį'eh ch'ilahdzǫǫl' įį'eh eldeel kįįy'.
He was eating on shiny spruce pitch and spruce cones for food.
Natidaak tsiił tsiił wu'eh ha'įįshyaay k'it ay'eh natidaak.
He [that Squirrel] was walking around in a snow storm.
Noo' niithoogn k'i niniishyah ts'ogn dzeeh tl'ąyh eldeel kįįy'.
He went far away and was subsisting on shiny spruce pitch.
Jaxan ch'uudahmbee' shiin chi' hidiishyah.
All of a sudden in an open bare spot in the snow he walked into the summer.
"Dlik dlik dlik," detshyaak, dat ts'oo ke'itdät.
He blurted out, *"Dlik, dlik, dlik,"* and scampered up a spruce.
Ay'eh dineey iin "Nts'ǫǫ' eh nän du' hashihdįį'ąą?" hiyehnih.
And then the people said to him, "How did you survive?"
"Hogn ts'oo tooxe' agndeel eh diht'eh hashihdih'aan ayk'eh."
"Out there I ate the 'spruce's grease,' [pitch] and I survived on that."
Ishyit k'et shyįį' wunel'ąą.
And this is as far as it goes.

CHAPTER
12

Ch'ilahdzǫǫl' Teemaak
The Spruce Cone War

MT: "This is why spruce cones grow in clumps on the spruce limbs."

Recorded November 22, 1994. Tape 2B (6).

Ch'ilahdzǫǫl' iin taanign' da' heekon'hihdǯitąą.
The Spruce Cone People were camping around by the riverbank.
Łahtthign' ts'ą' nił'eh hihdeltth'ih.
They were all staying together.
Xogn tah keey hihul'ąy dänh.
They had a village at a place around there.
Ch'ilahdzǫǫl' iin hihdeltth'ih Taatsaan' wunik eh huuxa niishyah.
Raven came to where the Spruce Cone People were staying with some news.
"Ooh! Dootehsu' ts'ą' chih didhaltth'ih.
"Oh! How nicely you live here [Raven said].
Nohchaa lah mbaah nohts'ą' taadäl hǫǫt'eh.
While you are just taking it easy, a war is going to come to you.
Mbaah ee'ahdäł," huu'ehnih.
You are going into a war," he told them.
Tah Ch'ilahdzǫǫl' iin mbaah eh hihtetshyih yaa'ogn.
So the Spruce Cone People started to go to war out there.

Ishyit mbaah hiits'ą' aadäl iin du' hiits'ihetniign ts'ą'
They were going to war, but they did not even realize
hǫǫ' naahdeltth'ih ch'axan Ch'ilahdzǫǫl' iin huuta'inshyih.
that the war had already reached them there where the Spruce Cone People were staying.

§

Ay'eh Taatsaan' huujaann' nuh'įį xa nih shyak xa huu'eh naholnign.
And that Raven that had told them a lie, actually he had come to steal their possessions.
Aytah Ch'ilahdzǫǫl' iin xaa huhnatshya'.
And due to this the Spruce Cone People got embarrassed.
Ayxa ch'a Ch'ilahdzǫǫl' iin huuk'oh xodn nahǫǫłiin.
That is how the Spruce Cone People got crooked necks.
Ch'ilahdzǫǫl' iin xaagn huhnatshya' xa' ts'oo naadlih kehiideeł tl'aan ts'ogn k'it nihniideel ishyit.
The Spruce Cone People got embarrassed due to this, and instead they climbed up the spruce tree and stayed there on it.
Ayxa ch'ah ts'oo k'it Ch'ilahdzǫǫl' iin keynitxeeł.
So that is why the Spruce Cone People began to grow in clumps on the spruce.
Ayshyįį'.
That's all.

CHAPTER
13

Haak'ąy' Tayh Natetxeek
When 'Wide Step' Packed Back the Hills

MT: "Haak'ąy' was a giant who ate people. He is the one who put the hills around the country."

Recorded December, 1991. Tape 3A2.
Haak'ąy' xa nootidhagnnign.
I am about to tell about *Haak'ąy'*.
Haak'ąy' ddhäł tayh gaay natetxeek hiyehnay.
They say *Haak'ąy'* was packing back some little hills.
Dineh iin eldeeł.
He was eating people.
Jinän' k'it natidaak ts'ą' dineh iin eldeeł.
This guy was going around the country and was eating people.

Hii'än tayh k'it hii'än hiidatdiidik tl'aan
Then they [the people] blocked off the entrance to his den on a hill, and then
"ne' shyign' Haak'ąy' xol' kah wushyii uhshya'" nih.
someone [a human being] said "I should go inside [the den] to get *Haak'ąy''s* leg."
Haak'ąy' huudhehxeek tl'aan wuxol' ha'ehtsik.
After *Haak'ąy'* would kill them, he would cut off their legs.
Än tthiitehxak "Na' deh Haak'ąy' xol'," niik.
He threw it [the leg] out, "Here is *Haak'ąy''s* leg," he *[Haak'ąy']* says.
MT: "He tricked the people and he was listening to them from inside the den."

"Än tthiitehxak "Haak'ąy' xol' nohts'ą' tthiitidhakxał," nih.
He threw it out, and he says "I threw *Haak'ąy''s* leg out to you guys."
Ay tl'aan ch'ishyuuy dineh chih "Shiy ch'a Haak'ąy' gaan' ka wushyii uhshya'."
Next a different person said "I too am going in to get *Haak'ąy''s* arm."
Huugaan' tthiitehxak, "Jah Haak'ąy' gaan'.
He *[Haak'ąy']* threw out an arm, "Here is *Haak'ąy''s* arm."
Haak'ąy' gaan' aay tl'aan ch'ishyuuy "Shiy ch'ah Haak'ąy' tthi' ka wushyii uhshya'."
After *Haak'ąy's* arm another guy said, "I should go in after *Haak'ąy''s* head."
Ne' shyign' niishyign ts'änh huutthi' k'i'ehtsik ts'ą'.
Back inside [the den], he *[Haak'ąy']* cut off their heads.
"Jah Haak'ąy' tthi'," nih.
"Here is *Haak'ąy''s* head," he said.
Ishyit chih hiida'etdik, "Shiy ch'a Haak'ąy' chaagn' ka wushyii uhshya'.
They kept him blocked off in there, and [someone else says] "I'll go in for *Haak'ąy''s* rib."
Ch'a Haak'ąy' chaagn' chaagn' tthiidehthayh.
So he threw out his rib.
"Haak'ąy' k'ąyy' ka wushyii uhshya'."
"I'll go in for *Haak'ąy''s* pelvis bone" [another guy said].
Haak'ąy' huuk'ąyy' ha'ehtsik tl'aan än tthiitehxak.
Haak'ąy' cut off their pelvises and threw them out.

§

Jah ch'a Haak'ąy' k'ąyy' saan tah hǫǫ' hiyeh'įh.
Now they could barely do anything after *Haak'ąy''s* pelvis.
Nǫǫ sta'ihaak tl'aan, "Haak'ąy' ch'ida'įhshyaał," nadetniih.
Then he *[Haak'ąy']* got away, and it was said "*Haak'ąy'* has escaped."
Haak'ąy' än ha'ihaak xu sta'ehshyik tl'aan.
Haak'ąy' got out of the den and ran away.
"Haak'ąy' ch'ida'įhshaał," nih.
"*Haak'ąy'* has escaped," someone said.

Hiitnidik hǫǫ' hiyeh'įh.
They kept following him, and doing the same thing.

Chaa'aat chih ddhäł nii'ixeek.
He would pack more mountains here and there.
Łahtthign' dineh iin ixąą.
He kept killing all the people.
Hiitedhehxiin, hi'idetniih ay'eh hǫǫ' tah nän' k'it dineh iin xa tayh natetxeek.
When they would be about to kill him, they would fail, and out in the country he kept packing hills for the people.
Hitidhehxiin hi'idetniih.
They would be about to kill him, but they would fail.

§

Du' t'axo tayh aanax nahtetdign eh än ndee ts'ą' ha'ihaak.
Finally they came around a hill where he usually came out from a den.
Niign' huhdih'ąą.
They found him back in there.
Hiixoł' tth'eex k'inet-ttheeł.
They severed the tendons of his legs.
T'axo hiidaniideeł.
Finally they had him trapped.
Hiidaakon'niidlaay, niłdänh ts'ą' hiidaakǫ'niidlaay eh łät shyiit tthiinetkay eh
They blocked him off with a fire, they blocked him off with a fire on both sides, and he *[Haak'ąy']* ran out into the smoke and
t'axo hiidhehxiin eh.
finally they killed him.
Dineh iin laan ihdląą ts'ą' etl'ach'eexąą tl'aan tah hiidhehxįį.
Thus after he had killed off lots of people, they had killed him.
Ishyit k'eshyįį' t'axo nel'ąą.
This is as far as it goes.
Haak'ąy' naxognnign.
I told about *Haak'ąy'*.

Bessie John of Beaver Creek, Mary, and Jeannie Sanford of Mentasta at a potlatch in Mentasta in 1971. Photo by Andy Tyone.

CHAPTER
14

Jǫǫ Choh Qǫnign'
Goshawk's Story

In this story Dzeh Ch'ǫǫ (sharp-shinned hawk) and Jǫǫ Choh (goshawk) are fighting against the other two hawks, Tthintson' (pigeon hawk or merlin) and Tontsiit (gyrfalcon) on the White River.

Recorded February 25, 1988; corrected Fall, 1994. Tape 1, 2 .

Jǫǫ Choh, Tthintson', Tontsiit, Dzeh Ch'ǫǫ Naadzah Niign' tthän' neenaattheh dą' naheembaak.

The Goshawk, the Pigeon Hawk [merlin], the Gyrfalcon, and the Sharp-shinned Hawk, before our time went to war down at the White River lowlands.

Ay tl'aan yaanign' Naadzah Niign dänh nign' ch'ihtinel'iin.

Afterwards they hid out in the White River uplands.

Dzeh Ch'ǫǫ k'ąy' jia' delk'įįl tadiłeey.

Sharp-shinned Hawk [the youngest one] was throwing peeled willow sprouts in the water.

Tthän'ts'ą' tatdiłeey dihnah huhnign' haheemaak.

While these were floating down below, up in the uplands they started a war.

Mboonüü iin shyah ts'ą' nahatdäł tah,

When they were returning to the older brother's [Goshawk's] house,

"naambaah naa niideeł de', 'uhų uhų' nts'ä' dįįniik," nihiinih de'.

they told him, "if the war comes to you, they say that you should say, *'uhų uhų.'*"

"'Uhų, uhų, uhų' dooni' de'," hiiyehnih.
They told him [Sharp-shinned hawk], "you should say, *'uhų, uhų, uhų.'*"[1]
Diihiidiit hiikah isäł tah, "Węy."
However, if they holler for themselves [and have survived], they would say *"Węy."*
Ay'eh mboonüü iin shyah ts'ą' nahatdäl eh
And so they arrived at the older brother's house and
hiikah hǫǫheey eh "Uhų, uhų, uhų," nih.
they spoke for him, saying *"Uhų, uhų, uhų."*
Wuchil dhelxįį ts'ą' hiihetnayh.
They realized that the younger brother [Sharp-shinned hawk] had been killed.

§

Ts'ą' Jǫǫ Choh ts'oo shyüh itäł tl'aan shyüh wuk'it na'įįkįį ts'ą' oogn.
And Goshawk kicked snow off a spruce and then the snow fell on him there.
Ishyign chinel'iin tl'aan Tontsiit iin Tthintson' iin eh shyah ts'ą' nahatdäl eh ttheh naambaah shyihįįdeeł.
He hid there [in the snow] and later as Gyrfalcon's people and Pigeon Hawk's people were returning to the house, they walked into the war.
Łahtthign' huu'etl'ach'eheexąą doo huhįįxąą.
So they killed them all off since they had killed them [the Gyrfalcon and Pigeon Hawk's people].
Ay tl'aan naambaah iin nahtideel.
After that the warriors left.
Ts'iłoo neehaal eh Jǫǫ Choh huuk'eh teeshyah tl'aan Jǫǫ Choh łahtthign' huu'etl'ach'eexąą.
One night passed and Goshawk came upon them, and then Goshawk killed them [Gyrfalcon's people] all off.

1. This call means that the brother hawk has been killed.

Added September 17, 1991

Huu'etl'ach'eheexąą dänh ishyit huu'ahk'eet nii'inshyah tl'aan kon' cho:h dihk'ąą.

And there where they killed them, he [Goshawk] stopped at their home and built a big fire.

Ts'ą' wunia' huuxeel' naxeełhiyaldäl ay huuts'ą' tthidiłeeh.

And he threw them with their packs and all that they were carrying into the middle of the fire.

Tl'aan huu'etl'atjehk'ąą tl'aan wuk'it da'eeshyah :l'aan na'itdidhelxjj.

After he burned them up, then he went into it [the fire] and then he killed himself.

Ishyit k'eshyjj' hi'ishnayh.

That's as far as I know.

*MT: "So we say **kon' deltl'ät** 'the fire is whistling.' If a fire whistles, it means something, like if somebody dies. When the fire whistles, that person is asking for food. There is one whistle for a human, and a different whistle for a bear."*

Nahtänh nįhtl'ǫ̨h ch'ixia taagn elt'eh nih, taagn elt'eh nįhtl'ǫ̨h.
He said there were three thunderbird eggs there, and the three eggs were blue.

CHAPTER
15

Nahtän T'oh
The Thunderbird Nest

This is an account of an incident that happened to Bell John.

MT: "There is a bird in that thunder. My dad [Bell John] says he has a breast like a dog and he looks like a spruce hen. Sometimes they find him where thunder lands and splits a tree. Sometimes that thunderbird is dead in there. This happened when I was really small."

Recorded January 30, 1992. Tape 1B1.

Tehshyüü Ddhäl' chį̈' ne' nahtän t'oh tthee netch'ogn tah shta' natidaagn eh

My father was going around the top of 'humpback whitefish mountain' [Wellesley Mountain], back among the sharp rocks

nahtän xia' udih'ą̨ą̨.

he found a thunderbird's nest with thunderbird eggs.

Nahtänh nı̨htl'ų̈h ch'ixia taagn elt'eh nih, taagn elt'eh nı̨htl'ų̈h.

He said there were three thunderbird eggs there, and the three eggs were blue.

Shta' ch'ixia nih'ą̨y tineh'į̈' eh

My father was about to look at the eggs

nahtän yaa nahts'ä' hǫǫheeyh.

and then the thunder spoke [boomed] around there by him.

Ay'eh "Nahtän sheh taldik!" niithänh ts'ä' ddhäł nohshyign' stąą'iltthädn xa' etshyiyh.

He thought "The thunder is going to blow me up," and, because he ran back down the mountain, he saved himself.

CHAPTER
16

Yaadiimeey
The Northern Lights

MT: "Wolverine has white fur below his back part. That's the picture of the northern lights. And when the northern lights start lighting up, it means the wolverine is walking around at night all over the place. That's why northern lights are on when the wolverine moves around."

Recorded November 20, 1995.
Nahtsi̱ąh yaadiimeey dehk'än' tädn tah.
The wolverine makes the northern lights burn at night.
Yaadiimeey dihk'aak ts'ą'
He sets the northern lights on fire and
yaadiimeey dehk'än' tah, nahtsi̱ąh iin nahtel'üh.
whenever he makes the northern lights burn, the wolverine people are walking around.
Nahtsi̱ąh nahtel'üh tädn tah.
That's the wolverine walking around at night.

CHAPTER
17

Stsǫǫ Shaan Qǫnign'
My Old Grandmother
Ch'aldzeek Shyii Dineh Gaay Na'ithädn
The Little Man Standing in the Moon

The power of the moon as a religious symbol is explained with subtle word play and humor, as with the silly name for the boy ***Stsǫǫ Shaan*** *'My Old Grandmother,' or with the use of* ***ch'ǫǫsi'****, magic words of the hunting religion. In the opening episode, the spear falling from a tree refers to the Little Boy in the Moon standing up and then coming down to earth.*

Recorded December 12, 1991; transcribed Fall, 1994.

Ch'aldzeek ts'ineh'įh dänh, hǫǫsǫǫ ts'ay ts'ehxe iin ch'ich'ee' dishyiit nahetdaag ts'ą' ła'ahtįį́ł, tl'ąąh ts'ąy wudzih ch'inohtiin ła'ahtįį́ł, wuk'it ts'ineh'įh.

When we look at the moon, we see on it, on the right side, that he is holding a caribou's ovaries, and on the left side he is holding caribou stomach sausage.

§

Dign' ts'oo tthihchįį dįį́thät

An object fell out from the top of a spruce [carrying the Man in the Moon's spirit],

tl'aan xayh daatign ha'alt'ayh.

and then popped up among the spruce roots.

Ts'ą' ts'iiniin itsüh nuuy tah ts'ą' ts'eenät dichaay.
And a baby was crying in the timber, and there was an old lady with her grandchildren.
MT: "The spirit turned into the baby."
Ts'ehxe łaakay iin nehshyeeyh.
The woman was raising two girls.
Ay ts'ehxe iin hii'uukah tidik tah k'edadelxeeł.
As those girls went for it [that baby], it quieted down.
K'aa iitsüü.
He was not crying.
Ishyit daahetdign eh tay' ts'iiniin nuuy tah ts'ą' itsüh.
Then they went inside again, but the baby was still crying out in the timber.
Hihdiitth'ik, tay' hii'uka natetdik tah ch'ǫǫkol.
They heard him and went for him again, but there was nothing.
Ay'eh t'axo ts'eenät, "Shiy mbuuka tuhshya' shyign' didhaltth'ih," huu'ehnih.
And then the old lady told them, "I will go for him, you stay inside here."
Ts'eenät yuukah aahaal eh t'axo itsüü eh yaa niiniishyaay eh ts'iiniin xayh daatign ha'alt'ayh.
The old lady went after him, and just as it cried, she stopped by him, and the baby was sticking up between the roots.
Haayįhtiin tl'aan dayiltįį ts'ą' yinehsheeh.
She took him back and brought him in, and she raised him up.
Ay ts'ehxe iin du' stahniideeł.
Those women went away.
Dee'eh eh tah hihdeltth'ih.
They were staying with their uncle.

§

Ay tl'aan "Stsǫǫ Shyaan" yetnii'ąą.
After that time she named him "My Old Grandmother."
Ts'ą' hǫǫ' "Stsǫǫ Shyaan" mǫǫsi'.
So that was his name, "My Old Grandmother."

Nishyeeyh neeshyąą t'axo dineh gaay choh eltsiin eh,
He is growing, and he grew up and the little man looked bigger and,
"Xahnogn' ddhäł eekeh ɬį̨ natinɬiuk[1] nuun de' uukah," hiyehnih.
"You drag [take] the dog up the mountainside in order to look for a porcupine," they told him.
Aydu' ɬį̨ deh tthiltiin tl'aan ddhäł eekeh nuun ka natidaak ay ɬį̨ du' itthich'ehchüh ts'ą' naytet-ɬiuk.
He took that dog out with him, and as he went around on the mountainside for porcupine he was dragging that dog around.
"Ɬį̨ natinɬiuk stsǫǫ shehnih," niithänh.
He thought, "Grandmother told me, 'you drag around the dog.'"
Ɬį̨ natet-ɬiuk dziin uudih.
He dragged the dog around all day long.
Du' t'axo nasaatee'aan eh kon'tign ni'inshyah.
As the sun was setting, he stopped by the doorway.
"Stsǫǫ! Stsǫǫ ɬį̨ natishɬiuk dziin uudih."
"My grandmother! My grandmother I dragged the dog all day."
Ts'ist'e' tthichanetnak, "ts'iit, nuun shaa na'inɬiu," yuunih.
The old lady ran out proudly, thinking, "He has dragged in a porcupine for me."
Eh chih ɬį̨ thaat shyüh neltänh.
But the dog had snow frozen in its mouth.
"Ee:y diixa ɬį̨ tthiich'edhįhchüüh?" yehnih.
"Hey! how come you strangled the dog?" she said to him.
"Stsǫǫ diixa ɬį̨ natinɬiuk shdį̨nih?" xuh yehnih.
And he said to her, "My Grandmother, why did you tell me to drag the dog around?"

1. The humor here is based upon the pun in the usage of the verb theme *O+ɬio* 'to drag an object.' As an idiom, this verb can be used for an older person without much strength bringing something along. Here, however, the boy interprets her command literally and he literally drags the dog.

§

Łįį ay tl'aan tay' neeshyaan eh "Ah'ogn gah uukah thuu t'ah dach'idhįįtl'įų," hiyehnayh.

After the dog incident, he grew some more and they [she] told him, "Set a snare for rabbits out there under the branches."

Gah kah dacheetl'uun naadlįh ts'oo eekeh dach'eetl'įų ts'ą'

He started to set snares for rabbits but instead he set the snares on the side of a spruce tree [among the branches], and

jįǫ įį'eh nahdaah įį'eh itdlį'.

a camprobber and a great gray owl got snared.

Ay'eh wuts "Hǫǫ' la xa' tth'ik ya'įįttheeł tl'aan dąą'tah xu' dants'itl'iuk," yehnih.

And his grandmother said to him, "Hey, you are supposed to chop some material for a snare fence; then we set the snares," she told him.

"Stsǫǫ nan chidaa thuu t'ah dach'idhįįtl'įų shdįįnih?" xu' nih.

"But Grandmother, why did you tell me to set snares *under* the branches?" he said.

Gah ka dach'eetl'įǫ gah nii'elshyeeyh.

So he set some snares for rabbits and he brought back rabbits.

Dahdzäł da'ee'ąą.

There was a rack up there.

Dahdzäł k'it gah laan nehtänh.

He froze lots of rabbits up on the rack.

Gah hatnaldok.

Rabbits were all piled up.

Ay tl'aan "Stsǫǫ! Gaał chįį' tsuuna'," yehnih.

Later he tells her, "My grandmother, let's move to the end of the snare line."

Gaał chįį' nihniinaa.

They moved out to the end of the line of snares.

Dahdzäł t'aat ts'ist'e' gah na'ehxįį' ts'ą'

Under the rack the old lady [the grandmother] was thawing out rabbits,

gah ts'ät yits'änh gah ts'ät itl'uh tl'aan, yahtle' ǧ'eh gah thäł yaa itl'uh.

and after she weaved a rabbit skin blanket from them, she weaved some pants for him, rabbit skin pants.

Iy coat yi'eegn ǧ'eh gah thäł yaa gah eek yaa eetl'ǫ.

She weaved a coat for him, rabbit pants and a rabbit coat.

§

Ay tl'aan neeshyaan eh dat ts'ist'e' uchil hah'ogn hut'iin.

Later he grew up, and he lived next door to the old lady's younger brother [his uncle].

Dayuudetkänh.[2]

He made a request to him.

"Mbät ehdänh tidhaktǧ', nǫh'ǧh!

"You see that I am about to starve of an empty stomach! [his uncle says].

Shaa nitǧithiit."[3]

You make a dream-wish for me."

"Nee'eh shaa nitǧithiit nehnih," wutsǫǫ.

"Your uncle says you should make a dream-wish for him," his grandmother says.

"Ahaha, shee'eh (shaa) nitǧithiit, shehnih."

"Yes, my uncle told me to make a dream-wish for him."

Ahahaha ay tl'aan idlox tl'aan "Stsǫǫ, shee'eh nk'aa' nde' nehnih, wudǧinih."

Then he laughed and told her, "Grandma, tell my uncle to give me one of his arrows."

Dachink'a' yaa daa'intąą.

She brought a large game arrow to him.

Nakeydahtüh, nakeydahtüü tl'aan tthiydǫhxał.

He turned it around, and after he turned it around, he threw it in the fire.

2. This word is used for a direct request to a medicine person for success in hunting.

3. This word is used for a good wish. It is not used for hexes.

"Stsǫǫ, aanoo shee'eh k'aa' tl'atjetk'ąą!
"Oh my grandmother, out there my uncle's arrow is about to burn up!
Ahahaha stsǫǫ shee'eh k'aa' tl'atjeek'ąą!"
Oh my grandmother, my uncle's arrow just burned up!"
Dachink'a' łahtthign' wutl'atjeek'ąą.
All the arrows got burned up.
Tl'aan neetįį k'ahmän' ts'ą' ts'iniithädn eh.
Afterwards he went to sleep, and in the morning he woke up.
"Stsǫǫ, shee'eh huhdign' ddhäł k'it tl'aan łaa'įįha' wudįįnih."
"My grandmother, tell my uncle to go up in the mountains."
"Wuttheh tąy wuk'ini'įįthät de', ay nǫǫ nduu tthän' k'a' wu'aljaak nign' įįhaał, ning' wuk'eh įįhaał,' udǫǫni' de'," ditsǫǫ ehnih.
His grandmother told him [the uncle], "As you are walking along up ahead there, if you notice that an arrow has slid down below somewhere, then tell him to go there after it."
Yee'eh ka daniishyah tl'aan hǫǫ' yehnih.
She went in seeking his uncle and told him that.

§

Nǫǫ' łaa'iha' du' änh tah wuk'eh wuneh'įh.
So he [his uncle] was going around out there, and he saw some tracks by a den.
Yinaahaal eh noo' yaa yik'eh hahküh ts'ą' yinaahaał.
He followed him, and he followed his tracks to the front of it [the den].
Shoh än etdaay wudaadįį'tah wuk'aa' daa'eetąą.
His arrow was lying by the entrance of an occupied bear den.[4]
Ay'eh shoh haa'įhtiin tl'aan nayih'oł ts'ą' shoh na'inxįį.
He took the bear out [killed it] and then butchered it and packed the bear back.

4. This is the arrow that had burned up.

Ay tl'aan ay Stsǫǫ Shyaan mbee'eh shoh na'inxǰ tl'aan ch'ąą deh'ǰh.
So then My Old Grandmother's uncle packed back that bear and then he made a feast.
All yǰhmbiah ts'ą' dineey iin nach'ihi'aał.
He cooked everything, and the people were eating.
Ay Stsǫǫ Shyaan kon'tign' naan' tthiihetdetniign tth'ii'elt'ayh.
'My Old Grandmother' was lying stretched out by the doorway where they go out.
"Naan'," "Sǫ' tah," hiiyehni.
They told him, "move over," but he says, "nope."
Hiitüh tiitak tah "Ahahaha nohch'itsogn nak-'ǰh," huu'ehni.
As they stepped over him, "Ahaha I see between your legs," he tells them.
Ch'ehłaan iin nsoon iin du' hii'aanah nakehtitdik.
Some of the people, the nice ones, started to walk around him.
Hǫǫ' hiyeh'ǰh hiitüh titak hǫǫ' huuxa idloh.
As some of them stepped over him, he laughed at them.[5]

§

Ay tl'aan dishyah daa'inshyah ay'eh wutsǫǫ iin hihdeltth'ih.
He went back into his own home where his grandmother and the family are staying.
Udzih na'aadaał.
The caribou were returning.
"Stsǫǫ, wudzih na'aadaał shee'eh huudǰinih," yehnih.
"My grandmother, you tell my uncle that the caribou are returning," he tells her.
Udzih na'inshyah.
The caribou herd had come back.
Łahtthign' wudzih ninih'üüt.
All the caribou stopped.

5. He is observing the people to see who treated him decently.

K'ahmän' ts'oo tatneettheeł.
In the morning he chopped down a spruce.
Naan' ts'oo choh tatneettheeł.
He chopped down a big spruce across the way.
Aytl'aan wutsǫǫ yigah eegn gah eek jį'eh yaa ixąą yikench'ol' jį'eh
Then his grandmother's rabbit coat, the rabbit coat that she had made for him along with his boots,
ay yaa eedlaay eh noo' tthit'adalnayh.
was lying there by him, and he fell forward into the fire.
"Stsǫǫ! Stsǫǫ Shyaan tl'ajetk'ąą dǫǫni' de'," ditsǫǫ ehnih.
"My Grandmother! You should say 'My Old Grandmother got burned up,'" he said to his grandmother.
Unǫǫ' wutl'ajeek'ąą, ts'ist'e' itsüh.
He got burned up in the fire, and the old lady was crying.
"Stsǫǫ Shyaan tl'ajetk'ąą!"
"My Old Grandmother got burned up!" [the grandmother says].

Tayh Tsäł 'little hill' or High Cache Hill looking toward the northeast. Photo by Wayne Towriss courtesy of Yukon Native Language Centre.

Ay tl'aan dat ts'oo tatneettheel yitthihchi' ts'änh noo' tah hatnatke'.

Later there were tracks leading out to the woods from the tip of the tree that had been chopped down.

Naan' wudzih ninih'üüdn ts'ą'.

The caribou had stopped out across from there.

Wudzih ji̱xąą tl'aan yishyeetth'än' keych'ineh'ah ts'ą' wudzih ehtiat k'i'eltsi̱.

He killed some caribou, and then he propped up a jaw bone, making it appear like a group of sleeping caribou.

Łahtthign' yi̱ixąą.

He had killed them all.

Haadäl eh wudzih ts'ą' haadäl eh łahtthign' Stsǫǫ Shyaan yi̱ixąą ch'idą'tah.

They were coming to the caribou, and as they were coming, My Old Grandmother already had killed them all.

"Dadhahnay ninach'iltiat, sǫ' udahsogn," huu'ehnih ts'ą'.

"You be quiet, they are sleeping, don't make noise," he tells them.

Wudzih ch'idą'tah ji̱xąą.

He had already killed the caribou.

Ay tl'aan dee'eh "Wudzih ihxąą dadihnih, naa'ah'oł huudi̱nih."

Later he said to his uncle, "I say that I already killed the caribou. You tell them to butcher them."

Łahtthign' wudzih naaheh'oł.

They butchered all the caribou.

Wudzih ixaan tah "Ndzeey' tl'ųh, ndzeey' sąyh," yehnih ts'ą' wudzih shyąą' t'eey u'itdeey łahtthign' ji̱łaak.

When he killed the caribou, he had said to them "Your blue heart! your black heart!" and then for no obvious reason they all fell over and died.[6]

6. These are the magic words he used to kill the caribou.

§

Ay tl'aan wudzih kaa heltąyh.
Later they made trips for the caribou.
All wudzih niihelshyeeyh, all wudzih ch'inohtiin nats'ixąą.
They brought back all the caribou and were making sausage out of the small intestine.
Udzih nohtiin ay'eh xa tthiitaani'ɉthät.
Due to that caribou sausage [not giving it to him], he made a curse.
Stsǫǫ Shyaan "Wudzih ch'ittheh aahaał ts'ehts'ąy aahaal nohtiin shtl'a'ah'aay" nih.
My Old Grandmother said, "Give me the sausage of the lead caribou or of the second one."
Dineh iin łahtthign' ts'ą' hiits'ą' ts'ani'elt'eh ts'ą' k'at'eey ishyit tl'ahiyii'aal.
All the people were mad over this, and they did not give any [sausage] to him.[7]
Ayxa huu'eh tthiitaani'ɉthät.
So due to that he put a curse on them.

§

Ditsǫǫ wutsǫǫ eedah tah all huu'eh shyüh na'ɉhchąą.
Where his grandmother was staying, there had been a wet snowfall.
Shyüh huu'eeshyign nɉhchąą ts'ą'
It snowed until it covered them up, and
wutsǫǫ eedah dänh du' ch'udahmee' ee'ąą maanax shyüh ch'ithüh k'int'eh.
where his grandmother was staying was a bare clearing in the snow that looked like a skin [like a wall of snow].
Ayshyii tah wutsǫǫ eedah.
In here [in the clearing] his grandmother was staying.
Ay tl'aan gah eek ɉi'eh all yaa ɉixąą eh na'ettl'ɉǫ tah.
Later he got dressed in the rabbit coat that she had made for him.

7. This is the caribou sausage that The Little Boy in the Moon is holding in his left hand.

Shyüh k'it dǫǫ aayh eh ditsǫǫ k'it ts'iniishyah.
He came out in snowshoes there on the snow above his grandmother.
"Stsǫǫ, stsǫǫ hǫǫ' t'eey' hǫǫnayh lah."
"My grandmother, my grandmother, you are still alive!"
"Ąą," yehnih.
"Yes," she told him.
"Hanteey', shyüh xa dach'uudinkan."
"Hurry, make a request about the snow" [he said].
"Shyüh ta'uuduułädn," yehnih.
"Let the snow melt," she told him.
Shyüh xa xootneedeeyh ts'ą' łahtthign' shyüh ta'uudeełät.
They prayed about the snow, and all the snow started to melt.
Łahtthign' shyüh uudeełädn eh
All the snow melted and
ishyitts'änh t'axo ditsǫǫ ch'a' yaat'aagn ch'aldzeek shyiit ts'ą' teeshyah.
after that he left his grandmother and went up into the the sky and into the moon.
Ishyit ch'aldzeek shyiit dineh gaay tleegn' na'ithät.
So that is that poor little boy that stands inside the moon.
Aych'a Stsǫǫ Shyaan mǫǫsi'.
That's his name, My Old Grandmother.
Ayshyįį'.
That's all.

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